

ISSN 0007-0904

CUP- H05503-9-KP1704

THE BRITISH JOURNAL
OF
AESTHETICS

VOLUME 23

NUMBER 1

WINTER 1983

9

Published for The British Society of Aesthetics
by Oxford University Press

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The British Journal of Aesthetics

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KANT AND THE OBJECTIVITY OF TASTE

Karl Ameriks

BEFORE BEGINNING his deduction of the categories in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant stresses that 'the reader must be convinced of the unavoidable necessity of such a transcendental deduction' (A 88/B 121).¹ Unfortunately, in his *Critique of Judgement* Kant does not so directly address the issue of why a *transcendental* deduction of taste is *needed*. It appears that his main ground for a separate deduction here rests largely on the claim that judgements of taste (i.e., judgements of pure beauty; this is what Kant's deduction focuses on, and it is all I will discuss here) are not only universally valid but also subjective in a distinctive and significant sense. There are a number of features of taste that Kant appeals to in his attempt to back his claim about the subjectivity of taste, but I will argue that none of his considerations are sufficient.

Many of the points I will make against Kant have already been raised by other interpreters, but for some reason they have neglected to pull these points together and to draw the radical conclusion that a Kantian ought to acknowledge the objectivity of taste (which, in this context, means it rests on objectively beautiful and immediately perceivable natural forms). I aim to show (i) how this conclusion is the best accompaniment for the essential starting point of Kant's aesthetic theory, viz., the idea of universally valid aesthetic judgements, (ii) how some explanation can be given of Kant's failure to draw this conclusion explicitly himself, and (iii) how this all helps to illuminate the peculiar role that individual empirical judgements play in Kant's philosophy in general. I will not explore how this conclusion affects the validity of the deduction of taste itself, for I have presented an interpretation of that deduction elsewhere,² and I happen to believe the main effect of accepting the objectivity of taste would only be to simplify that deduction somewhat.

I

The difficulties in understanding the need for a deduction of aesthetic judgement begin with Kant's prefatory analysis of such judgement. Kant breaks this analysis down into four moments: disinterestedness, universality, subjective purposiveness, and necessity. The second and fourth moments are practically indistinguishable; I take them to be of fundamen-

tal importance and will return to them in some detail. The third moment has significance because of the role of the notion of purpose within the project of the third *Critique* as a whole, but it is of secondary value within the analysis of taste itself, and especially with respect to the issue of the need for a deduction. On the other hand, some have thought the first moment is of the greatest importance for aesthetic judgement, but I will argue that if one attaches too much emphasis to the idea of disinterestedness then this only obscures the need and structure of the deduction of taste. In particular, it can cover up the fact that in Kant's theory the relation between aesthetic judgement and mere disinterest can be contingent.

This point can be made with practically any plausible candidate for the definition of 'disinterest' here, e.g., Kant's own simple remarks that a disinterested judgement is one indifferent to the object's existence (§2.1), or Paul Guyer's interpretation that it is primarily marked by indifference to the object's 'causal nexus'.³ The main point is that Kant concludes to the feature of disinterest only via a quick argument by exclusion: he says that since in fact the only types of interest we are familiar with are sensual and moral, and that since he believes he can show aesthetic judgement cannot be based on either mere sensual or moral grounds, it follows that aesthetic judgement is disinterested (§§2.2, 8.7).

The cash value of Kant's discussion is thus simply the distinction between aesthetic as opposed to sensual and moral judgements. If it did turn out that in fact aesthetic judgements were in some other hidden way interested (i.e., really based in some non-sensual and non-moral interest), this in itself need not endanger the essence of Kant's position on aesthetic judgement. In particular, the key claims of universality and necessity could be maintained, for Kant's own analysis of moral judgement allows that these features can be compatible with judgement based on interest. Logically, there is no way that the mere interest involved in sensual or moral judgements is what makes them distinct from aesthetic judgement; rather, there are independent intrinsic distinctions between such judgements and aesthetic judgements, and it just happens that sensual and moral judgements share features which Kant thinks allow their being grouped as 'interested'. The most Kant need believe is that, *given* the quick (and dubious) argument by exclusion, disinterest might be helpful not logically but epistemologically for distinguishing aesthetic judgements; a judgement's not appearing interested (in either of the two specified ways) to us may be a ground for considering that judgement genuinely aesthetic.

Ultimately I will argue that for Kant not only does disinterest have at best this shaky epistemological attachment to aesthetics, but moreover even this attachment is dispensable. Many interpreters have denied this by suggesting that the primary Kantian *way to determine* if a judgement is aesthetic

is in effect to check one's mental history to see if it is disinterested in origin.⁴ But if it turns out (see below, at the end of section IV) that really determining disinterestedness is impossible or insignificant without *first* determining certain features of the object to which the judgement is directed, then the establishment of disinterest as such can be really unnecessary (although attention to it, i.e., its appearance, sometimes might be handy as a kind of short-cut way of gaining a preliminary estimate of the nature of one's situation).⁵

If disinterest as such need not distinguish aesthetic from sensual and moral judgement, then the crucial question remains, what are the operative intrinsic differentia for Kant? Fortunately there is a ready though rarely emphasized answer here. The basic features that Kant always stresses in his arguments are what can be called the *universality* and the *non-conceptuality* of aesthetic judgements. Briefly, the pattern of his argument involving the first feature is this: an aesthetic judgement is meant as valid for everyone; but although an aesthetic judgement essentially involves pleasure, no judgement that asserts merely sensual pleasure can be valid for everyone; therefore an aesthetic judgement cannot rest on mere sensual grounds (e.g., §13.3). The argument about non-conceptuality generally has this pattern: when we determine that an object has (pure) beauty, we can do this without use of the concept of the object, i.e., without a notion of its perfection or what it ought to be; but to make a moral judgement is always to judge on the basis of concepts and what ought to be; therefore aesthetic judgement as such cannot rest on moral grounds (§§4.2, 15).

When combined, these two arguments present the fundamental problem of Kant's aesthetic theory: how can a judgement be valid when it is aesthetic and not sensual or moral, and so apparently is meant as universal and yet not resting on conceptual grounds (§31.1)? This problem *alone* generates all of Kant's attempts to legitimate taste, and it is notable that in its formulation and resolution no specific mention of disinterest is necessary. The case for the need of a deduction of taste thus rests on the arguments from universality and non-conceptuality, and it is to their evaluation that we now must turn.

II

The limitations of the non-conceptuality argument (= 'proposal one') are perhaps most familiar and evident. The argument simply does not show that in principle aesthetic judgements are independent of concepts; all it can show by itself is that they are independent of moral concepts (broadly speaking). Thus even if it is granted that in judging a sunset is beautiful one is not making any claim about the moral significance of the sun's setting, or the perfection of its being in that state, it still can be held

that here one is necessarily applying concepts, e.g., the concepts 'sun', 'setting', 'colourful', etc.

Although Kant doesn't always link his claim about the non-conceptual nature of aesthetic judgement to an implicit premise that to use a concept is to consider something's perfection or how it ought to be, the only relevant specific arguments that do not follow this exact pattern follow others which are of no more help. For example, what Kant stresses sometimes is simply that the non-conceptuality of aesthetic judgement is apparent from the fact that we don't believe a matter of taste can be *proved* by concepts alone. We believe a person 'must see for himself' if he is to decide by taste about something's beauty (§§8.6, 33). Obviously this point still does not rule out *all* use of concepts in taste, and in fact recognizing this is alone compatible with Kant's own later remarks that aesthetic judgement involves an indeterminate concept (e.g., the supersensible, §57.4). This point also shows the limitations of another version of Kant's argument, where he notes that we can call a flower beautiful without knowing or applying the *botanist's* concept of it (§16.2, cf. §29.17). Even if this is not meant simply to tie the concept of a thing again to the full or 'perfect' concept of its species, its stress on what is only a very specific kind of notion of the concept of a thing (its complete scientific description) makes the argument quite similar to the others. Another technique Kant uses is simply to oppose 'aesthetic' to 'logical judgement' while defining the latter as involving mere conceptual *subsumption* (§38, Remark).⁶ Here again, only a very special kind of terminology is behind the idea that taste is 'non-logical' or 'non-conceptual'.

What Kant's arguments show at most is that in taste the consideration of concepts, or at least of some types of concepts in certain kinds of ways, is not sufficient, not that it is not (in some ordinary sense) essential. Although this point may serve in Kant's system to distinguish aesthetic judgements from some moral ones, this is not much of a conclusion, for it is a fundamental fact of that system that *no* particular phenomenal features are determinable from concepts alone. From the clear fact that not only Kant but also his opponents would grant that beauty is a phenomenal as opposed to a deontological or noumenal feature, it follows that *of course* we can't determine beauty by concepts alone. I suspect that Kant didn't come clean about this primarily because of a lingering tendency to equate mere concepts with concepts of things *qua* Leibnizian noumena, or at least *qua* types fully determinable scientifically and/or *a priori* (either sheerly logically or morally; see §16.4). The remark that aesthetic properties are not found in the concepts of things in *this* sense is still compatible (in Kant's world) with judgements of beauty functioning just as objectively as ordinary particular empirical judgements.

Now that the limitations of the non-conceptuality argument are appar-

ent we can turn to Kant's other main consideration, his argument from universality. This feature is in fact the crucial one for aesthetic judgement, for without it the idea of a deduction would immediately have to be given up. But the feature is easily misunderstood, and although Kant himself is quite clear about the first likely misunderstanding, he does not attend enough to a consequence of his own explanation. What he makes clear is that by calling aesthetic judgement universal he means not that it is logically universal but only that it is 'universally valid'. That is, the judgement of beauty he is discussing is always meant as a judgement about some particular x , not as a universal judgement of the form, 'all x 's are . . .' (§8.5). What Kant does not explain, however, is how this point alone makes the need for a special deduction of taste appear problematic. Kant's transcendental deductions are paradigmatically deductions of *a priori* concepts (categories) and so they aim to show that these apply to a whole realm of possible experience (see e.g., A 93/B 126, B 168). But, as Kant stresses himself, in aesthetics we are not trying to prove anything like this, for whereas we may try to show all objects must fall under the categories, we are *not* out to show that all objects (of our experience) are beautiful. (Kant is also surely not even trying to show that all objects can or ought to be considered beautiful, in the sense in which all objects might be held to be at least surveyable in accord with various regulative ideas.)

One response to this difficulty is to contend that although what the first *Critique* aims to deduce is a list of concepts that must apply to all the objects of experience, it does this by arguing these concepts are essential to 'experience' and thus to various kinds of empirical judgements, such as of the form, 'the sun warms the stone'. Therefore, since the categories are deduced as necessary conditions of such judgements, the deduction argues not only that categories are needed but also that such judgements are in need of them. Thus there is something *about* logically non-universal judgements that needs to be deduced, and so the mere particularity of aesthetic judgements does not exclude the relevance of some kind of deduction for them. In addition, it can be replied that although Kant also notes that all particular aesthetic judgements are *a posteriori*, i.e., known via experience (Introduction, VII. 4), this too need not make a deduction irrelevant for the same can be said of other types of particular judgements.⁷ But while this counter-argument shows there *could* be a relevant deduction bearing on aesthetic judgement, by itself it still does not show exactly why *aesthetic* judgements are to be approached *separately* or precisely how they are to be explained. One might, of course, contend that the reason why aesthetic judgements require a distinct deduction is not to justify the assertion of any particular quality of any particular judgement—for Kant does not mean his original deduction of non-aesthetic judgements to do that either—but simply to justify aesthetic judgement itself in general as a distinct type. But

here this is simply to beg the question, since the distinctiveness of aesthetic judgement is precisely what is to be established.

None the less, Kant insists there is a universality in aesthetic judgement that calls for a special deduction, namely in the fact that a claim of beauty is meant as a claim *all* other subjects (with our form of sensibility) *should* agree with. It is this feature (= 'proposal two') which Kant uses immediately to distinguish aesthetic judgement proper from sensual judgement (§8.2f.): a sensual judgement (judgement 'of sense' rather than 'of taste') is supposedly meant as but 'privately valid' (§9.2); the agreement of others is not at all relevant to it.

There clearly are some difficulties with the formulation of this point, for as should be especially obvious to Kantians, there is something quite odd about the notion of a sensual judgement. Either an apparent judgement is a judgement, and so it must be meant as valid for all, *or* it is not that, and is rather a mere act of sense or a sheer attitude. This point can be tested by considering a typical sensual judgement, e.g., the claim, 'the fragrance of this rose pleases me'. Here we can easily account for the example without introducing literally 'private validity'.⁸ The judgement 'the fragrance of this rose pleases me' is still meant as universally valid, for everyone is to accept that that is how the rose strikes me. (I here abstract from the further analysis of this judgement, i.e., from whether the claim is best understood as simply 'it seems to me that the rose is fragrant',⁹ or as 'this body has, i.e., is undergoing, a fragrant sensation'.¹⁰) The lack of universality has to do with not the validity but the content of the judgement.¹¹

Of course, it is likely that Kant is more interested in an implicit embedded judgement here, namely, 'this rose is fragrant'. But we can handle this judgement too without making any special distinction between private and general validity, for all we need is the general distinction between true and false judgement. We can say the rose is fragrant if and only if the rose really (phenomenally) is fragrant, and we can define 'fragrant' as we like for now, e.g., as pleasing (in an olfactory way) at least one normal person, or as pleasing most normal persons, or as pleasing all persons, etc.

We can now preserve Kant's contrast between sensual judgement and other kinds without using his unfortunate terminology. Clearly there are some judgements which, although they are meant as universally valid, are still distinctive in that their *content* involves simply a claim about how things appear to *me* or are in *my* body. On the other hand, there are judgements which make broader claims either implicitly or explicitly in their content (e.g., 'x is fragrant', 'x is pretty'), and Kant can and clearly means to classify aesthetic judgements here. But this still leaves aesthetic judgements in a quite unproblematic Kantian class, for most of our judgements are of this sort, and the fact that they are non-conceptual in the sense determined earlier is equally undisturbing. So the judgement that this rose

is beautiful still would seem to require no *more* deduction than the judgement that the rose is fragrant, or for that matter, that it is here, fresh, small (an inch wide), etc.

III

A third proposal for trying to establish a distinctive need for deducing aesthetic judgements is to rely on the fact that Kant takes aesthetic judgement not to involve the determination of 'cognitive' qualities (§3.2). Unfortunately, though, any attempt non-circularly to determine Kant's criterion for cognitive judgements leads back into the difficulties of his general vagueness about particular judgements.¹² In the third *Critique* Kant twice shows awareness of the problem of the nature of particular judgements, but what he says is hardly sufficient. At one place he suggests that cognitive properties are distinguishable because they are 'determining', and this in turn is to rest on their following from the *a priori* features of experience that have already been derived (Introduction, VII, 5, cf. §57, Remark, I. 4). This statement is unsatisfactory given either of its natural interpretations. If it is taken to mean that particular properties are literally *derivable* from the *a priori* features, it does not follow from what Kant has argued so far and rather is absurd and in conflict with Kant's own general views (for he is not so rationalistic as to say that the specific properties of individual objects are sufficiently determined by his categorial framework). On the other hand, if it is taken to mean that judgements involving such properties are merely in *accord* with transcendental analysis, then nothing yet rules out saying the same for beauty. In the second place where Kant broaches this issue he indicates a more complex development of something closer to the first of these two alternatives. That is, in his Introduction he suggests a point that well could have become the dominant topic of the whole third *Critique*, namely that there may be some way to extend transcendental philosophy to give an *a priori* account of not only the fundamental principles of nature but also the existence of some system of particular empirical laws (Introduction, V. 4). This line of argument, however, is in fact not taken very far by Kant, and it is unclear how it could ever reach the level of a deduction of a particular kind of phenomenal quality. It is thus still unclear why the beauty of a rose requires any *more* of a deduction than its size or fragrance.

The last considerations suggest a new version of the third proposal to the effect that what shows aesthetic judgements are distinct and non-cognitive is that they do not as such involve ascriptions of features involved in the empirical *laws* covering objects. Thus we may judge that a rose has a particular size in accord with various laws—confirmed in prediction and explanation—that we take to cover the rose. The 'causal nexus' of the object involves certain law-like properties that we can take to be its 'pri-

mary' and cognitive ones. Since there do not appear to be such laws of beauty, the special need for a deduction here may seem finally established. Yet again there are serious questions, for according to Kant just how do we take a property to be objective on the basis of falling under a particular law—what is the procedure here? In response to this problem, about all one finds in Kant explicitly are mentions of simple observation, induction, and hypothesis testing. The particular conclusion that a rose is of a certain size and shape would thus rest on typical empirical grounds and would be a conclusion drawn from various observations and experiments. Of course, one could stress that beauty does not appear so open to experimental measuring procedures for the determination of applicable laws.¹³ But in fact Kant does not stress this, and instead when he talks about a judgement of beauty not being based on empirical grounds, he explains that primarily by saying we don't properly make our aesthetic judgements by surveying and comparing the opinions of others (§33.2). Thus once again the line of argument offered by Kant is quite inadequate to distinguish aesthetic from other particular qualities.¹⁴ Here Kant's case rests merely on a sense in which what we mean by an aesthetic judgement is one determined through our own perception, and one could argue similarly that there are some non-aesthetic judgements (e.g., immediate observation reports) where non-reliance on a comparison of others' reports is also guaranteed as a matter of meaning.

It is unclear what reasons Kant himself had for employing this odd line of argument (though it may have something to do with the similar odd way that he argues about non-conceptuality), and in any case it is not even evident that *he could* have so easily stressed the non-measurability and non-lawfulness of beauty. This is because similar features can attach to at least one non-aesthetic class of empirical qualities, namely the so-called secondary qualities. Kant was notoriously unclear about how to treat secondary qualities and he appears to have changed his opinion just before the third *Critique*. Originally he held that qualities such as smell and taste do not *at all* attach to their purported object but are simply tied to observers and their bodies and vary with the supposed great variety in these bodies in the relevant respects (A 28–29, B 44, B 70n). Later he seemed to reject part of this view (by introducing a notion of 'objective sensation', §3.3) while still distinguishing primary and secondary qualities. However Kant exactly defines secondary qualities, he appears in trouble, for the most he says about the supposedly decisive features of measurability and lawfulness is that they (alone) directly cover the primary qualities, and this still would leave aesthetic properties not clearly distinguished from *all* properties that are at least usually taken to be cognitive.

Thus the variations between Kant's earlier and later statements on secondary qualities may not matter too much. If he takes the early view and says

that the qualities are sheerly subjective, he needs to explain the fact that people are necessarily at least as willing to say all others should see a particular rose, in appropriate circumstances, as fragrant, as to say that it is beautiful. Hence, whatever deduction is required for aesthetic taste would also have to be taken to be relevant to secondary qualities. On the other hand, if Kant takes the later view and says that, for example, a rose is objectively fragrant just as it is geometrically measurable, then the allowance of cognitive but not directly measurable properties makes the non-measurability of the aesthetic no longer a sufficient proof of its distinctiveness, and the special need for a deduction of taste is again unclear. Stated more concisely, the problem is this: even if secondary qualities are called subjective, Kant must allow they are as universally valid, and so (for all that can be said so far) are indistinguishable from aesthetic ones; and if they are rather called objective, their universality still isn't explained (here at least) in the way that of primary qualities is, so again they are not demonstrably distinct from aesthetic ones.

One way to respond to this dilemma is to admit that a broad deduction is needed, so that what Kant offers as a deduction of taste can be taken to apply in some way to secondary qualities as well. This is in effect the response I have pursued elsewhere (see reference 2), but at this point our duty is to consider whether some other way out is possible for Kant. There does seem to be an option available here, namely to develop Kant's later remarks in such a way that secondary qualities are to be understood as simply a particular complex of primary qualities (which qualities themselves may be, e.g., non-fragrant and colourless) in an object that is the cause and explanation of the effect in us of particular phenomenal quality impressions (such as of fragrance or colour). Here the strategy is to give the universality of secondary qualities a type of objective correlate and explanation that actually has been used and accepted, whereas this is not the case for aesthetic qualities. Once again, however, what seems to be the obvious solution in fact involves considerable difficulties. The immediate difficulty is that it is unclear why one could not hypothesize that beauty also involves such an objectively based universal quality, *especially* since the very universality meant in aesthetic judgement would quite naturally call for such a hypothesis (cf. A 821/B 849). The fact that no laws of beauty have been discovered should be given some explanation, but this is not so hard to do. Here one can emphasize the functional and emergent nature of beauty, the fact that it can be applicable in situations with all sorts of material complexes. It should not be surprising if beauty has a special elusiveness, for it clearly involves a kind of functional satisfaction which, unlike that of most phenomenal qualities, can range over all kinds of sensations. As many different materials may constitute a taste, fragrance, or lustre, so also very many different fragrances, tastes, and/or lustres can

constitute beauty, and thus the futility in the search for specific laws of beauty can be understood without special reasons for denying its objectivity. It is significant that there are many places where Kant himself recognizes that certain features might be quite objective (phenomenally) and yet, because of a special complexity, incapable of being brought under specific laws foreseeably describable by us (see e.g., his comments on history and psychology). Therefore, given Kant's own philosophy, and especially his acceptance of a universal validity in taste, there is still no clear reason why in principle there should be no objectivity in aesthetic as opposed to other (non-primary) qualities.

It must be admitted that this conclusion does go against Kant's own preference for speaking of the aesthetic as not objective. By now, however, this should no longer appear as a sufficient objection, for that tendency can be explained in terms of the oddities of the non-conceptuality argument (i.e., Kant's tendency to equate 'being in the concept of x ' with 'being proved from that concept' or 'being part of the object x , *qua* thing in itself'), and it would in any case cause similar difficulties for the status of ordinary secondary qualities. Here much is often made of the fact that Kant speaks of beauty as 'only' 'intersubjectively' ('*gemeingültig*') and not 'objectively' universally valid ('*allegemeingültig*'). But that discussion (§8.3f.) does not invalidate our conclusion. For although Kant does speak parenthetically of what may be contained in something's empirical concept, the examples of the 'objectively' universal that he gives have to do typically with pure concepts such as moral ones. And elsewhere he also indicates that ordinary secondary qualities are to be treated as 'merely' intersubjectively valid too, since they only involve the way things *appear* to beings like us.

IV

There is a fourth and final proposal that must be dealt with if one is to preserve the conclusion that there are only relatively trivial senses in which Kant provides grounds for restricting talk of the aesthetic as objective. This proposal contends that taste is subjective because, as Kant repeatedly insists, it has to do with discrimination by a kind of pleasure, and pleasure is always a mere feeling and so not objective (§3.2). Here it can be responded that there is a genuine sense in which feeling is subjective, but this is inadequate to license any distinctive claim about taste. It is a fundamental of Kant's general philosophy that *whenever* we determine qualities *a posteriori* we must do so via intuition and thus via some sensation which is subjective at least in the sense that it *exists* in us. Thus even when a tree is perceived as being really tall and green there occur sensations that exist merely subjectively. So, the fact that the kind of taste Kant is discussing

requires discrimination *by* something subjective does not entail that *what* is discriminated should be called subjective.

There are, of course, some understandable lines of thought that probably lie behind the fourth proposal. For example, if it were the case that these sensations themselves were somehow literally tall and green, they obviously could be said to be also more than subjective in that they would at least resemble intrinsic (phenomenal) objective qualities. Then it could be argued that since objects do not have the quality of pleasure or its semblance themselves, the sensation of pleasure has a *special* subjectivity because of its not being even a resemblance of what is objective. However, this line of argument is surely inadequate, for *no* sensations literally resemble objects, and so the special nature of pleasure as opposed to other sensible qualities must lie in some other fact—and yet the only one that gets discussed directly by Kant is that it alone is not taken to *refer* to something in objects. But if we dismiss the odd requirement of resemblance, it is not yet clear why pleasure can't have an objective reference.¹⁵ So, although it certainly would be odd to think of beautiful things as themselves *feeling* pleasure, the most that need be asserted in an aesthetic judgement which, for example, picks out a tree as beautiful, is that it is *somehow through* our feeling a kind of pleasure that the beauty (not the felt pleasure) of the tree is revealed.

Another understandable source of the fourth proposal would be the variability of feeling which Kant emphasizes, the fact that different persons exposed to the same object often have different feelings (§7.1). Here again one can counter with a similar claim about other sensible qualities: different persons exposed to the same object often experience quite different sensations of its spatiality—and yet we can agree that the object has objective spatial properties. Given all that Kant says there remain ways one could account for the appearance of a special variability of pleasure without implying that pleasures cannot refer to some kind of objective property.¹⁶

In particular, it can be stressed (1) that 'pleasure' alone is obviously an extremely general and vague term (thus it should not be surprising that 'I am undergoing pleasure' should be insufficient for making a very specific reference; as much could be said about the objective comment, 'I am having a bodily sensation'); (2) that although there may be some objects that just as standardly give pleasure to normal humans as they standardly give impressions of a certain size and colour, none the less it is understandably and especially easy for such feelings of pleasure also to be stimulated by other causes and manipulations of the body even in the absence of the ordinary objects, whereas the stimulation of the size and colour impressions, in the absence of the ordinary causes, is not *so* easy; and (3) that pleasure, or at least some kinds of it, is a relatively dispensable quality of

our experience, for without it we can still carry out most of our acts and cognitions, just as people can get along relatively easily without any sense of smell (and thus the fact that smell is in this sense not necessary might lead some to *think* it is less real).

Given these considerations, it is unclear why the mere fact that pleasure involves feeling should automatically condemn it to revealing what is merely subjective. In ordinary circumstances some sets of pleasures are taken to be about as reliable indicators of the objective environment as many other sensory impressions (otherwise it is unimaginable how classical utilitarianism could have ever had much practical appeal). As Kant himself notes (§7.3), just as there is a way of learning what others will treat as red, or hard, or round, so also one can develop a sense for determining what will strike others as pleasant (Kant says this sense provides a mere 'comparative' universality, but if that is the best we can have for any particular empirical claim, no special reasons appears to question its objectivity).

It is true that this implies that not only aesthetic pleasure but also some of what Kant calls the pleasures of mere 'charm' and 'emotion' (§13) can escape from mere subjectivity. What this shows, however, is only that Kant's discussion of feeling alone lacks a clear concept of sensual interest, and thus by itself cannot found the needed distinction between ('non-conceptual') merely sensual reaction and genuinely disinterested aesthetic response (and so the fact that my theory does not immediately distinguish these two need not matter either). Kant makes no intrinsic distinction between these (e.g., by appealing to different felt qualia of pleasure¹⁷) but at first simply takes the 'merely sensual' pleasures to be the ones that are so variable they cannot be taken to base a universal claim. This is surely inadequate, for if the notion of disinterest is to have epistemological value, it must provide means for *antecedently* singling out the judgements that can ('non-conceptually') make universal claims. Moreover, here Kant doesn't even have the escape of being able to say that the disinterestedness of a judgement isn't supposed to be so much a justification for its universality as rather just a part of its meaning—for, as was pointed out before, interested judgements can also be universal. Thus it must be something in the mere fact that a judgement is *sensually* interested that shows it is unfit for universality. But since, as we have just seen, the only fact about a sensually interested judgement that Kant stresses here is its non-universality, we have come full circle and the irrelevance suspected earlier in the notion of disinterest is now confirmed.

V

If neither disinterest as such nor any of the other proposals considered so far can help pick out aesthetic judgements, what can? The obvious strategy to follow here, given the conclusion that beauty can be treated as objec-

tive, is to find something in phenomenal objects themselves that would provide a basis for aesthetic pleasure as opposed to a response of mere charm or emotion. Kant suggests this move himself, but whereas he goes on to treat non-aesthetic feeling as sheerly subjective, we can rather allow even such feeling to reflect some kind of objective reference. In fact, a Kantian can admit some objectivity in all three kinds of experience that Kant fails to distinguish in enough detail, namely the experience of sensual pleasure, of aesthetic pleasure, and of ordinary secondary qualities. The common bond here is the fact that all these experiences can be held to involve claims about how all others should directly experience a particular object (thus 'non-conceptually' and 'universally'). At the same time, fundamental distinctions can be maintained about these three types of experience. For example, the kinds of objective features that typically generate mere sensual pleasures can still be different from the kind that generates aesthetic ones. Kant himself has a famous candidate for the main feature here in his hypothesis that aesthetic judgements alone are due solely to an object's form (see §30.1, where Kant comes closest to explicitly treating beauty as objective). Furthermore, both groups of feeling responses can generally be distinguished from experiences of ordinary secondary qualities by noting how the former are less articulated and depend on the latter. It is usually because an object appears relatively rough, or colourful, for example, that one responds with the feelings that one does, and not vice versa. This fact fits in with the dispensability of feeling noted before: merely sensual or aesthetic reaction can be founded in something quite objective and yet be distinct from 'merely perceptual' response, for it is quite imaginable for beings (e.g., robots) to have at least some sort of mere perceptual response to an object without having much feeling at all.

Even if a kind of objectivity is allowed to the whole range of experience, from ordinary secondary quality impressions through aesthetic pleasures to non-aesthetic pleasures, it would help to be able to say more about the distinctiveness of aesthetic as opposed to other feelings. Kant's own main suggestion here is that aesthetic response is a reflective response to form, either in the particular and dubious sense of delineation or the general sense of something that is simply there for all to see, whereas sensual response has to do with the 'matter' of each perceiver alone. Obviously, there remain difficulties with this suggestion, especially if some non-aesthetic pleasure claims can also make a claim about what all should experience. None the less, these difficulties primarily affect the problem of *specifying a priori* just what it is that is to be considered objectively beautiful; they do not defeat the general idea that beauty is objective, or at least that it is best thought to be so by any Kantian who accepts that taste is universally valid. The important thing is that this belief is not threatened by any of the alleged features of aesthetic judgement that Kant himself

stresses, namely its disinterestedness, its non-conceptuality, its particularity, its non-cognitiveness, its non-lawfulness, and its essential relation to feeling and pleasure. There are also indications that Kant had an awareness of the limits of transcendental philosophy here, for he says that aesthetics is a science only in so far as it merely explains a distinctive kind of judgement and the possibility of its validity (§34.2). Since in this case the kind of judgement happens to be particular and empirical, it should be no surprise that its proper instances are to be specified by ongoing practices rather than armchair legislation.¹⁸

REFERENCES

- ¹ Citations like this, preceded simply by 'A' and/or 'B' will be, as is the usual practice, to the first and/or second editions of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* (tr. by N. K. Smith, London, 1929). Citations in the text without such letter prefixes will be to the section numbers of Kant's *Critique of Judgement* (tr. J. H. Bernard, New York, 1959), followed by the number of the paragraph within the section.
- ² 'How to Save Kant's Deduction of Taste', *Journal of Value Inquiry*, vol. 16 (1982).
- ³ Paul Guyer, *Kant and the Claims of Taste* (Cambridge, Mass., 1979), p. 195.
- ⁴ The phrase 'one's mental history' comes from Guyer's interpretation, which I believe (despite some of the criticisms he makes of the notion of disinterest) generally encourages this view. See op. cit., pp. 173, 205, and note 18 below. Cf. also Harold Osborne, 'Some Theories of Aesthetic Judgement', *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 38 (1979), p. 138.
- ⁵ Moreover, as others have argued recently on independent grounds, it is unclear that disinterest is in any case a concept essential to aesthetics. (See e.g., George Dickie, 'All Aesthetic Attitude Theories Fail: The Myth of the Aesthetic Attitude', in *Aesthetics*, ed. by G. Dickie and R. Sclafani (New York, 1977), pp. 800–814.) Thus it is unlikely that any substantive loss would be incurred by holding that the discussion of disinterest as such is tangential to the logic of Kant's argument, although accepting this fact no doubt would involve taking away much of what most people have thought especially distinctive about Kant's theory.
- ⁶ Cf. Eva Schaper, who links the claim that beauty is not objective to the idea that there is no rule whereby it can be 'read off' and 'there is a marked absence of general principles' by which it can be determined (*Studies in Kant's Aesthetics* (Edinburgh, 1979), pp. 50, 27)—facts which surely apply to many objective features and even, if Kuhnians are right, to many scientific features.
- ⁷ Cf. Schaper, op. cit., p. 25, and L. W. Beck, *Essays on Kant and Hume* (New Haven, 1978), pp. 167f.
- ⁸ Kant's talk of 'private validity' seems to be closely tied to a belief that someone insensitive to beauty would be egoistic. See §42 and his *Gesammelte Schriften* (Berlin, 1902–), vol. 24, p. 354, and *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*, tr. by V. L. Dowdell (Carbondale, Illinois, 1978), p. 147.
- ⁹ See Gerold Prauss, *Erscheinung bei Kant* (Berlin, 1971).
- ¹⁰ See David M. Armstrong, *Bodily Sensations* (London, 1962), p. 117.
- ¹¹ See again reference 7 above.
- ¹² On this general problem see Robert Pippin, 'Kant on Empirical Concepts', *Studies in the History of Philosophy*, 11 (1979), pp. 1–19.
- ¹³ See Schaper, op. cit., p. 25, 24, who goes so far to say that here there is 'no established mode of verification', and correctness 'cannot be shown in the way in which the truth or falsity of an empirical

judgement can be demonstrated.' It is not explained how this is really compatible with a belief in the validity of taste.

- ¹⁴ Cf. Schaper, *op. cit.*, p. 27, who emphasizes taste is distinguished by resting on a 'stress on felt experience'—a fact which would hardly distinguish it from other objective attitudes.
- ¹⁵ Thus I differ again with Schaper, who says that aesthetic feelings are 'about' an object but then refuses to allow they are 'a way of being aware of the features or qualities of something' (*op. cit.*, p. 52).
- ¹⁶ Cf. R. Chisholm, *Perceiving* (Ithaca, 1957), pp. 138f., and Charles B. Daniels on 'pinching shoes' in 'Colors and Sensations, or How to Define a Pain Ostensively', *American Philosophical Quarterly*, 4 (1967), pp. 235f.
- ¹⁷ See Guyer, *op. cit.*, p. 171. However, as R. E. Aquila has argued ('A New Look at Kant's Judgment of Taste', *Kant-Studien* 70 (1979), pp. 17–34), it could be allowed that there are reasons for positing some structural and phenomenological peculiarities in aesthetic pleasure.
- ¹⁸ For an account of how for Kant the specific determination of beauty can involve the actual practice of criticism, see Robert Burch, 'Kant's Theory of Beauty as Ideal Art', in *Aesthetics*, *op. cit.*, pp. 688–703.

THE AESTHETICS OF LOVE IN COLERIDGE

David S. Miall

I

DURING THOSE formative years in the first decade of the nineteenth century when Coleridge was working out the main distinctions of his theory of imagination he was also experiencing an extended and unrequited love for Sara Hutchinson. One of his notebook entries records the moment that his love began—how, on November 24th, 1799, standing up in front of the fire in the Hutchinsons' house, he 'pressed Sara's hand a long time behind her back, and then, then for the first time, love pricked me with its light arrow, poisoned alas! and hopeless' (N 1575).¹ Being an acute psychologist and self-observer, Coleridge does not fail to question closely the nature of his passion for Sara over the next ten years that it possesses him in its full intensity. He examines the nature of love, its philosophical implications as well as its cognitive and affective signs, in a series of frequent notebook entries—a contribution to the psychology of love whose full significance has yet to be properly assessed.²

Much is now known about the influences which helped to shape Coleridge's aesthetic theory—his reading of Lessing, Kant, Schelling, and the Schlegels in particular offered him a philosophical framework, besides several ideas and concepts which he adapted or—only too often—appropriated without due acknowledgement. This is now commonly known. What seems so far unappreciated is the effect on the shaping of his theory of this more pressing and personal source—his love for Sara. Coleridge developed ideas about the self that loves which cast much light on the self that creates art or responds to it. To examine the unity of thought and feeling which Coleridge's love taught him to find in the self is to return to the aesthetic theory with a clearer view of what Coleridge is claiming when he speaks of imagination, or of the role of symbols, or of the truths obtainable from art. (It may also help, incidentally, in dispersing a dogma about Coleridge which used to be widely believed—that he was the first New Critic.) The experience of love and the response to art, in Coleridge's account, both induce a greater self-knowledge but a knowledge in particular of the insufficiency of our conscious awareness. The signal benefit of both experiences is to alert us to modes of feeling within the self, of a continual and necessary development of the self beneath the

consciousness. Art and love enable us to begin recognizing and co-operating with this self within the self, to help make conscious what is unconscious.

Perhaps it was the suffering that Coleridge's love caused him which did most to develop such an understanding. His notebooks testify frequently to his grief at realizing that Sara was forever unattainable, or to the pain he feels simply at being absent from her. And yet such love brings insights of the highest value. In one of the few notes which directly relate love to the nature of art, Coleridge suggests both the type and form of knowledge to be found in poetry—a note which connects some of his key ideas in a way that cannot be found in his more formal writings on aesthetics. (I emend the note slightly to eliminate Coleridge's corrections.)

Love will vent his inmost and veriest Grievs in sweet and measured sounds . . . is it that—a divine Joy being its end it will not utter even its woes and weaknesses, sorrows & sicknesses, except in some form of pleasure? pleasure the shadow & sacramental Type of that Joy (which by union fit . . . et facit et creat et creatur) or is it rather, that its essence being a divine synthesis of highest reason—and vehementest Impulse, it must needs the soul in its two faculties, or perhaps of the two souls, vital power of Heat, & Light of Intellect—attract & combine with poesy, whose essence is passionate order. (N 3092)

Coleridge went on to use the ideas in this note of 1807 in the lectures of 1811–12 on Shakespeare and Milton, in the course of his remarks on love and the insufficiency of the self.

Who shall dare to stand alone, and vaunt himself, in himself, sufficient? In poetry it is the blending of passion with order that constitutes perfection: this is still more the case in morals, and more than all in the exclusive attachment of the sexes.³

While the lecture, as A. J. Harding points out, widens the scope of the note by adding to it Platonic ideas on the final cause of love,⁴ it loses at the same time in psychological immediacy and connectedness. Similarly, in going on to define poetry in the *Biographia Literaria*,⁵ Coleridge takes up the central role of pleasure but omits both the relation of pleasure to the intellect and its patterning after that Joy which is inherent in the self. These connections, and others of relevance to the poetic theory, can be found elaborated in Coleridge's writings on love. In this article I focus on two main features of these writings: Coleridge's intellectual grasp of the nature of the self, and the role he assigns to the feelings.

II

The unity of intellect and feeling which Coleridge elevates into a poetic principle in the note of 1807—that 'synthesis of highest reason—and vehementest Impulse'—is one of the consistent themes of Coleridge's thinking.

It is declared to be the object of his metaphysics, one purpose of which is to enhance 'the Light of Love & of Conscience'. He aims 'to make the Reason spread Light over our Feelings, to make our Feelings diffuse vital Warmth thro' our Reason . . .' (N 1623). Imbued with his feelings for Sara, what does Coleridge's intellect tell him when he considers the self that loves?

First, he recognizes the unity of reason and feeling cannot exist only at the conscious level. In contemplating the nature of love, Coleridge frequently emphasizes the incompleteness of consciousness—in fact it becomes the dominant factor in his account of the self and the power of love. The perfection of love, he says, lies in the adding of inclination to duty; it does so by increasing the self's sense of reality but such a sense is available to consciousness only as an intuition:

All our Thoughts all that we abstract from our consciousness & so form the Phaenomenon Self is a Shadow, its whole Substance is the dim yet powerful sense that it is but a Shadow & ought to belong to a Substance/but this Substance can have no marks, no discriminating Characters . . . (N 3026)

Thus the reality of the self that love makes known to us is an unconscious one. Coleridge leaves it open whether love may not be the only cause of the self's greater sense of inner reality, since the note goes on to speak in general of moments when this is felt—it is 'deepest felt during particular phaenomena with a consciousness that the phaenomenon is in us but *it* not in the phaenomenon, for which alone we yet value the phaenomenon . . .'. This account could therefore apply to aesthetic response, and be taken as a characterization of the limits of our consciousness regarding aesthetic phenomena. Such an interpretation is validated by Coleridge's use of the word *shadow* in the first note I quoted, where he speaks of pleasure as 'the shadow & sacramental Type of that Joy'; pleasure in this sense would be one of those phenomena of the shadow self which point to a deeper reality within.

Such experience indicates the progressive nature of the self—whether it is the pleasure given by a poem or the feeling of love, it gives us what Coleridge calls elsewhere a 'realizing intuition'.⁶ This consciousness, he continues, 'constitutes the craving of True Love'. There is a strong sense of the self's incompleteness, and yet of a reality within the self to which the consciousness of the beloved acts as a symbol. Coleridge registers the intensity of his feelings for Sara in another note, of 1809: 'there is a something here,' he says; 'O No! not here! but deeper deeper far, & yet here too, which makes the other but its symbols—even as we see by the eyes yet know feel nothing of the eyes while we are seeing' (N 3520; original partly in cipher). This reality lying beneath the symbol constitutes the energy and direction of the self; love helps to motivate the substance

self without either pre-empting or consuming its energies. The highest feeling of love is eloquently described in this way by Coleridge: he talks of

that *willing* sense of the insufficingness of the *self* for itself, which predisposes a generous nature to see, in the total being of another, the supplement and completion of its own;—that quiet perpetual *seeking* which the presence of the beloved object modulates, not suspends, where the heart momentarily finds, and, finding, again seeks on . . .⁷

The later definition of imagination in terms of symbols—the combining of Reason and the Senses which ‘gives birth to a system of symbols . . . consubstantial with the truths, of which they are the *conductors*’⁸—takes on a new depth and productivity when it is set beside these comments on the beloved as a symbol for truths within the self. In this light the conscious response to art can be seen as consubstantial with one’s own continuing processes of unconscious thought, which constitute the ‘substance’ self. The work of art modulates, but does not suspend, the seeking of the self; that is to say, the symbols which it presents mobilize and direct the energies of the self but do not suspend them in a purely contemplative aesthetic act.

III

The difficulty which Coleridge often has in expressing his idea of the nature of love, the broken phrases, odd syntax, and corrections to be encountered in the *Notebooks*, suggest a quality of thought beyond what could be made explicit. Coleridge complains of this difficulty, as he records his sense of unworthiness for Sara in his notebook: ‘Beloved!’ he says, ‘. . . what are Words but air? & impulses of air? O who has deeply felt, deeply, deeply! & not fretted & grown impatient at the inadequacy <of Words to Feeling,> . . .’ (N 2998). Ideas may be present to us in the form of feelings, which are beyond expression: Coleridge characterized what he meant by *Idea* by observing that ideas ‘may indeed be suggested and awakened, but cannot, like the images of sense and the conceptions of the understanding, be adequately *expressed* by words’.⁹ The sense of the substance self which Coleridge’s experience of love gave him is such an idea; it led Coleridge to emphasize the importance of feelings—those that he termed obscure, or indefinite feelings. In *The Friend*, for instance, Coleridge developed the view that deep feelings should belong only to the living, moral concerns of the self; to attach such feelings to material objects is to degrade the self—we should ‘reserve the deep feelings which belong, as by a natural right to those obscure ideas that are necessary to the moral perfection of the human being . . .’.¹⁰ The virtue of love, he says elsewhere, is that it associates ‘a large proportion of all our obscure feelings with a real form’.¹¹ For Coleridge, the obscure feelings rightly interpreted, are the progressive part of the self, its route into the unconscious. In a

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remarkable note of 1818, speaking of the intuitive power in thought, and how unconscious thought is felt to be in advance of conscious, he says that in the human heart, 'Cause contains effect'—an effect which manifests itself to consciousness as an instinct or feeling, as of something missing:

yet the Cause goes before in order and in time/when we understand this, we shall understand the intellectual & moral Instincts as they must in part possess (for how can mere Vacuum *impel*?) but in part possess—i.e. they must possess unconsciously, and consciously miss ['yearn for']—The former the materia—the *feeling*—the latter the form, the idea. (N 4438)

Thus the feelings of love, rightly interpreted, are an instinct for the moral development of the self, which can take place only in unison with the beloved—the self discovering itself. The lover, says Coleridge, 'worships in his Beloved that final consummation <of itself which is> produced in his own soul by the action of the Soul of the Beloved upon it . . .' (N 2540).

Art, as the note quoted earlier states, may result from such feeling—even the griefs of love point to 'a divine Joy' (N 3092). The term *Joy* has a special significance for Coleridge—it is the result of just such an interchange involving the self as characterizes love, and is therefore a sign of self-discovery. In 'Dejection: An Ode', Joy arises in communion with nature only if the self can give of itself:

O Lady! we receive but what we give,
And in our life alone does Nature live.

Similarly, love is described (in N 2540) as the action of the lover's soul 'upon the Soul of his Beloved/till each contemplates the Soul of the other as involving his own, both in its givings and its receivings . . . '.

The work of art speaks to the 'substance' self, therefore; if the feelings it arouses are of the 'obscure' kind—and Coleridge's claim that poetry 'gives most pleasure when only generally & not perfectly understood' (N 383) is relevant to this point—then the work is speaking to that in us which is incomplete, to our progressive moral instincts. What the effect of art might be on our unconscious powers of thought is described in a note of 1804, which makes as explicit as such a matter could be, how the response to art, as with Joy and the course of love, is essentially a question of giving in order to receive: poetry, says Coleridge, is

a rationalized dream dealing . . . to manifold Forms our own Feelings, that never perhaps were attached by us consciously to our own personal Selves . . . O there are Truths below the Surface in the subject of Sympathy, & how we *become* that which we understandly behold & hear, having, how much God perhaps only knows, created part even of the Form. (N 2086)

The work of art is, in other words, inextricably linked with, and dependent on, our own unconscious patterns of thought and feeling; it is not an independently existing or autonomous whole. As Rilke puts it, the effect of works of art is not measurable: 'Their influence is so much dissolved in memory and experience and so interwoven therewith that it does not allow of individual representation'.¹² The form of the work of art, Coleridge is saying, is created from the feelings and sympathies of the 'substance' self; response to the work is a disposition or attitude of the self which, being involved in the progressive thought of the self, must be held to be unbounded, never complete. Consciousness does not possess the power to exhaust wholly the meaning of a given work of art.

IV

Aesthetic unity was perhaps Coleridge's highest principle. While he inherited it from his philosophical predecessors, from Plotinus to Kant, his experience of love enabled him to know its potential in the self with an urgency that was both wonderful and terrifying. Coleridge saw that love gave a unity to his own thought and feeling: as he expressed it in 1802, 'Love to all the Passions & Faculties, as Music to all the varieties of Sound' (N 1229); but this was a radical and progressive unity, not a static unity for contemplation; it was the unity of a self inclined in one direction; 'My love of Sara', he says in 1810, 'is my whole Being wrapt up into one Desire, all the Hopes & Fears, Joys & Sorrows, all the Powers, Vigor, & Faculties of my Spirit abridged into <one> perpetual Inclination' (N 3996). When he came to account for the nature of art, Coleridge saw its effects similarly as a disposition of the whole self. As a unity of thought and feeling, 'a rationalized dream', poetry in us is the form taken by the giving and receiving self.

But the response to poetry involves the substance self, and must therefore bring the hidden purposes of that self into ascendancy by dislodging the normal ascendancy of conscious thought. Coleridge describes the effect of Wordsworth's poetry on him as a defamiliarizing of perception and the awakening of wonder—the poet combines 'the child's sense of wonder and novelty with the appearances, which every day for perhaps forty years had rendered familiar'.¹³ By unsettling the interpretations of consciousness, poetry enables the substance self to find expression; as with love, poetry thus generates an increased 'sense of reality' (N 3026). This explains Coleridge's account of the genius in 'On Poesy or Art', who creates art by making 'the external internal, the internal external . . .'; there is, says Coleridge, 'in genius itself an unconscious activity; nay, that is the genius in the man of genius'.¹⁴

To create art is an act of Imagination, which simultaneously disperses the thought available to conscious thought into a new form, while giving

power and reality to the dispositions of the substance self. As Coleridge puts it succinctly in a note of 1811, Imagination is 'the fusing power, that fixing unfixes & while it melts & bedims the Image, still leaves in the Soul its living meaning—' (N 4066). Thus that unity of purpose found in the self that loves, in its one 'perpetual Inclination', is found again in the self that creates or responds to art. The poet, in Coleridge's famous account, 'brings the whole soul of man into activity . . .'.¹⁵ To understand the progressive nature of the self that loves is also, finally, to identify it with the 'I AM' that lies at the centre of Coleridge's most important account of Imagination. Just as 'the eternal act of creation' of the I AM is repeated in the primary Imagination, so the same progressive substance self gives its form to the acts of the secondary, or aesthetic Imagination. This Imagination 'dissolves, diffuses, dissipates, in order to recreate; or where this process is rendered impossible, yet still at all events it struggles to idealize and to unify'.¹⁶ Love and poetic creation exhibit the same radical process—all the thoughts and feelings of the self, just as Coleridge found in loving Sara, are transformed and dedicated to a single purpose. Coleridge's experience of love thus enabled him to verify and give a new and powerful meaning to the principle of unity in aesthetics.

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- ¹ Original in Latin. This and subsequent references in brackets refer to S. T. Coleridge, *Notebooks*, ed. Kathleen Coburn (1957-73).
- ² Molly Lefebure's recent biography, for example, *Samuel Taylor Coleridge: A Bondage of Opium* (1974) disparages Coleridge's writings on love as wish-fulfilment and self-delusion.
- ³ *Shakespeare Criticism*, ed. T. M. Raysor (1960), vol. II, 107.
- ⁴ A. J. Harding, *Coleridge and the Idea of Love* (1974), 96-7.
- ⁵ 'A poem is that species of composition, which is opposed to works of science, by proposing for its immediate object pleasure, not truth . . .' *Biographia Literaria*, ed. J. Shawcross (1958), vol. II, 10.
- ⁶ *Biographia*, vol. I, 173.
- ⁷ *Coleridge's Poems*, ed. E. H. Coleridge (1912), vol. I, 465.
- ⁸ *Lay Sermons*, ed. R. J. White (1972), 29.
- ⁹ *On the Constitution of the Church and State*, ed. J. Colmer (1976), 165. For an interesting discussion of the aesthetic implications of this term, see T. J. Diffey, 'The Idea of Art', *British Journal of Aesthetics*, Vol. 17 (1977), 122-8.
- ¹⁰ *The Friend*, ed. Barbara Rooke (1969), vol. I, 106.
- ¹¹ *The Letters of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, ed. Earl Leslie Griggs (1956), vol. II, 768.
- ¹² *Selected Letters of Rainer Maria Rilke*, trans. R. F. C. Hull (1946), 130.
- ¹³ *Biographia*, Vol. I, 59.
- ¹⁴ *Biographia*, Vol. II, 258.
- ¹⁵ *Biographia*, Vol. II, 12.
- ¹⁶ *Biographia*, Vol. I, 202.

SØREN KIERKEGAARD: A THEATRE CRITIC OF THE HEIBERG SCHOOL

George Pattison

ADDRESSING THE Student Association of Copenhagen University the young Søren Kierkegaard commented that 'from a poetic genius' position of immediacy, form is nothing but the coming into existence of the idea in the world, and that the task of reflection is only to investigate whether or not the idea has gotten the properly corresponding form'.¹ This definition of the task of reflection also defines the fundamental principle of literary criticism as Kierkegaard understood it. In this article I shall show whence Kierkegaard derived this principle and how he employed it in his critical practice, with particular reference to his theatrical reviews.

From the standpoint of the history of literature Kierkegaard's writings on aesthetics and his own 'literary' output form a bridge between the formal, idealist aesthetics of J. L. Heiberg (1791–1860) and the more psychologically orientated aesthetics of Georg Brandes (1842–1927). But the principle of the correspondence of idea and form Kierkegaard owed to Heiberg, and Kierkegaard's theatrical reviews can be seen as some of the best examples of the critical work of the Heiberg school.

Heiberg is little known in the English-speaking world except as the specific butt of Kierkegaard's attack on Hegelianism.² Although a light-weight in philosophy Heiberg was one of the dominant figures in Danish literature from the 1820s through till the 1840s. Indeed one historian has described him as the 'Pontifex Maximus' of Danish literature in this period.³ He was eminent as playwright, poet, critic and editor—it was in one of his journals that Kierkegaard's first publication appeared.

Heiberg's chief aim was the improvement of taste.⁴ Taste is not mere subjective feeling but is the acknowledgement of what genius has made objective. Taste has to do with the maintenance of correct distinctions in art, particularly distinctions of form, the ignoring of which is the hallmark of dilettantism (JLH p. 15). The object of criticism, he claims, is therefore the form in which the artistic idea is made manifest (JLH p. 130).

Heiberg is concerned above all to distinguish between the different genres of art. Within each genre form and content are related in a specific way. It is thus impossible simply to transfer a story (content) from one genre (e.g., dramatic poetry) to another (e.g., opera), for the content itself

is changed in the transition. Heiberg makes this point with reference to Beaumarchais' *Barber of Seville* and Mozart's *Figaro* (JLH pp. 25f.). Likewise epic poetry may contain supernatural elements which cannot be presented in the theatre without overstretching the audience's suspension of disbelief (JLH p. 35). 'All art', says Heiberg, 'is either plastic or musical, depending on how it is made objective, whether in space or in time' (JLH p. 35). Poetry, which Heiberg calls Art's Art (as he calls logic 'Philosophy's Philosophy'⁵) contains both elements: in its *lyrical* aspect it is musical, in *epic* it is plastic. Dramatic poetry combines both aspects, being lyrical in the portrayal of *character*, epic in depicting *situation* (JLH p. 36).

Opera and Ancient Tragedy represent the lyrical, character-orientated pole; modern comedy emphasizes situation. But whatever the form of art 'every work which answers to the requirements of the form of poetry, under which it is categorized, is good, and if it answers perfectly to its concept then it is masterly' (JLH p. 43).

Heiberg develops the scale of genres on the basis of Hegelian dialectics. Every form of art has an *immediate* and a *reflective* stage, and a *speculative* stage, which is the *higher unity* of the two preceding stages.

Poetry in general is thus divided into the immediate (=the lyrical), the reflective (=the epic) and the higher unity of the two (=the dramatic). Dramatic poetry in turn is further subdivided, culminating in comedy. Comedy has an ironic consciousness of the limitations which the different moments of a work impose upon each other. Such irony is clearly very close to what Heiberg calls 'taste'. But within comedy itself the threefold dialectic is repeated. Heiberg himself sought to realize a 'speculative comedy' with his play 'Fata Morgana' (1838). Although much praised by a fellow-Hegelian, Prof. Martensen, 'in the theatre it was a fiasco',⁶ and Heiberg refrained from further experiments in this direction. How far Heiberg's theories are genuinely 'Hegelian' is highly questionable.

Kierkegaard had reservations about the details of Heiberg's schematization of genres, but he accepted the basic principle concerning the relationship of form, content and the task of criticism. I shall now proceed to look at his theatrical reviews in the light of this principle.

His first major published work, *Either-Or* (1843), contains a great deal of material on aesthetics in general and dramatic art in particular. In the first volume of this two-volume work there are moreover two sections which can be regarded as free-standing pieces of theatrical criticism. These are entitled 'The Immediate stages of the Erotic, or the Musical Erotic', essentially an appreciation of Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, and 'The First Love', a review of Scribe's play of the same name.

The nub of the Mozart piece is that *Don Giovanni* is an authentically 'classical', an 'immortal' work, because of the perfect coincidence of the subject-matter with the nature of the musical form.

The subject-matter is the character of Don Giovanni himself: he is sensuous immediacy incarnate. Christianity, Kierkegaard argues, by excluding the sensuous-erotic from the realm of the Spirit and by categorizing it as the demonic made it into a free-standing principle. Thus the legendary character of Don Juan developed on the Christian soil of the late Middle Ages.⁷ He is 'the demonic determined as the sensuous' (E-O p. 89).

Kierkegaard now has to show that music is the appropriate medium for this 'idea'. Language is 'the one absolutely spiritually qualified medium' (E-O p. 65), but music is akin to language. It addresses itself to the ear (E-O p. 66), it has time as its element (E-O p. 67), and negates immediate sensuousness, reducing it to the level of instrumentality (E-O p. 67). But only language has an intrinsic reflection which excludes the *immediate* absolutely, so only language is absolutely spiritual. Music thus expresses an immediacy which is qualified by its relationship to Spirit (its kinship to language) but qualifies it in such a way that it is excluded from the spiritual (its distinctness from language).

This is the same relationship of immediacy and Spirit which was exemplified in the figure of Don Juan, *ergo* music is the perfect medium for the artistic treatment of this figure. *Don Giovanni* is thus not only a great opera, but 'there is a qualitative difference between it and all other operas, which cannot well be sought in anything other than in the absolute relationship between idea, form, subject and medium . . .' (E-O p. 70).

The other 'review' contained in the first part of *Either-Or* is of *The First Love*. Again Kierkegaard has chosen in order to praise. But since this is a comedy the excellence which he finds in it will in accordance with his Heibergian principles be of a different kind from that which he found in the opera.

In accordance with Heiberg's categorization of comedy as involving the elevation of situation over character Kierkegaard writes that 'the personal substance and value of the poetic figure is commensurable with the dialogue, the outpourings of the monologue are rendered superfluous . . .' (E-O p. 245).

Although the speeches and dialogue are in themselves witty enough they are comically intensified by their setting in the situations 'so that the speeches grow out of the situation and also illuminate it' (E-O p. 260).

Such a comedy will appeal to the 'contemplative nature' which has a taste for situation, and which relishes the mental re-enactment of the situation. There is more to stimulate such reflection in a comic than in a tragic work, for the contemplation of a tragic situation induces a quiescent state in the mind, but in the comic situation 'reflection is moving within it; and the more it discovers, the more infinitely comic the situation becomes within itself and all the more dizzy does one become, while yet one cannot refrain from gazing into it' (E-O p. 261).

The appreciation of comedy is thus a highly intellectual activity. Kierkegaard likens it to the pleasure of the smoker who quietly contemplates the patterns of tobacco clouds. This casual reference to tobacco hints at his own taste for expensive cigars, a part of his 'dandyism', and it is tempting to associate the tone of his aesthetic formalism with the typical dandy pose of the refined connoisseur.

In any case just as the contemplation of tobacco clouds is in a sense essentially content-less, a contemplation of nothing, only the mind's own dreamy projections, thus pure reflection, so the comedy hinges on the revelation of the nothingness of the characters and their relationships. 'There must not be a single figure in it, not a single dramatic relationship which might make claim to survive the destruction which irony, straight from the beginning, has been preparing for everything and everybody in it' (E-O p. 271).

The heroine, Emmeline, exemplifies this destiny. She is a young girl in love with a romantic dream, which she is unable to distinguish from a prosaic reality. 'She has pathos, but since its content is nonsense, her pathos is essentially nonsense; she has passion, but since its content is unreal, her passion is essentially foolishness . . . she will make every sacrifice for her passion, that is, she will sacrifice everything for nothing' (E-O p. 251).

Since she is such a self-contradictory person she cannot be presented 'immediately'. The comic interest of the play subsists precisely in the destruction of the immediate. 'The immediately real situation is the unreal situation; behind this there appears a new situation which is no less absurd, and so forth. In the situation we hear the dialogue: when it is most reasonable, it appears most crazy, and as the situation recedes, so the dialogue follows along, more and more meaningless in spite of its reasonableness' (E-O p. 275).

It is perhaps significant that the two 'reviews' contained in this volume relate to opposing poles of the aesthetic spectrum; *Don Giovanni* representing the immediate, the musical, the emphasis on character (in Kierkegaard's view the character of the Don is the content of the opera)—*The First Love* representing the annulment of immediacy, reflection, where all depends on situation and the ironic annihilation of character. By taking such contrasting pieces Kierkegaard throws the basic criteria of aesthetic judgement into more vivid relief, namely the correspondence of idea and form. It is this which the two works have in common.

In his novelistic book *Repetition* (1843) Kierkegaard has a small section on the presentation of farce at the Königstäter theatre in Berlin. In Heiberg's terms farce or burlesque represents the lowest level of comedy. It therefore manifests the characteristics of the immediate—spontaneity, singularity, contingency, etc.—and stands opposed to the ideal or the universal. In his comments Kierkegaard presupposes this categorization.

In farce, he says, 'the effect depends in great part upon the spontaneous creative activity of the spectator, the single individual asserts himself to an unusual degree, and in his own enjoyment is emancipated from the aesthetic obligation to admire, laugh, be touched, etc., according to the prescription of tradition' (Rep. p. 51). This is because farce is too immediate to permit the intellectual appreciation appropriate to a 'higher comedy' such as *The First Love*.

The actors most suited to farce are 'not so much reflective artists who have made a study of laughter as they are *lyrical* (my emphasis) geniuses who plunge into the abyss of laughter and then let its volcanic force cast them up upon the stage. They have therefore hardly calculated what they will do, but let the instant and the natural force of laughter be responsible for everything' (Rep. p. 54f.).

The appreciation Kierkegaard allows himself is adjusted to the essential nature of the work. 'I lay back in my loge, cast aside like the clothing of a bather, flung beside the stream of laughter and merriment and jubilation which foamed past me incessantly' (Rep. p. 63). The burlesque theatre is no place for coolly observing the patterns of tobacco smoke, its atmosphere is positively Dionysian. Perhaps for this reason this section on farce is not a formal review of an actual production, but rather attempts to conjure up the atmosphere of the theatre itself, describing the audience, and commenting on particular details from various productions.

Two years after *Either-Or* Kierkegaard returned to *Don Giovanni* in a small critical article entitled 'A Passing Comment on a Detail in Don Juan'.⁸

But for a perfectionist such as Kierkegaard no detail is insignificant. If one detail is faulty this suggests that the idea of the work has not been correctly grasped. The detail in question here is the scene between Don Giovanni and the peasant girl, Zerlina. The article, in a very indirect manner, implies a critique of the production.

The character of Zerlina is, according to Kierkegaard, one of natural, unreflective simplicity. 'If one puts thoughts in her head . . . the whole opera has been misconstrued' (Crisis p. 98). He therefore criticizes the emphasis which the singer puts into the line 'No! I will not', in that it implies that Zerlina is struggling to come to a decision (Crisis p. 98).

Don Giovanni, as immediate sensuousness incarnate, is in his element with Zerlina; he commands her by the force of the power of nature which he embodies, and he addresses himself directly, commandingly to her. But Herr Hansen, the male lead, sings as if he were singing *for* her—as if he were a seducer involved with a more sophisticated girl, aiming by this song indirectly to arouse her passion. In terms of thoughtful and feeling delivery Herr Hansen is excellent 'but when we have to do with an opera—and that is our concern here—then this excellent delivery is . . . quite out of place' (Crisis p. 102).



In Kierkegaard's terms the opera has been conceived too reflectively—and therefore misconceived. It does not express the immediate passionate force which for Kierkegaard is Don Giovanni—the man, the idea, the opera. The production has committed the cardinal sin of ignoring the proper boundaries of idea and form.

In the two remaining reviews Kierkegaard returns to his favourite mood of unstinted praise.

The first, entitled 'The Crisis and A Crisis in the Life of an Actress' is a tribute to Heiberg's wife, Johanne Luise Heiberg, one of Denmark's leading actresses. At the age of 35 she has returned to the role of Juliet, and Kierkegaard contrasts the excellence of her interpretation of the part with what one might expect from a teenage actress making her debut.

What the public wants is an 'idol'—or as we would say 'a star'. It wants 'a damn pretty or a devil of a lively wench of 18. These 18 years, this damnable prettiness and this devilish liveliness, that is the art appreciation—and also its brutishness' (Crisis p. 70).

For the genuine aesthete things are different. Such a youthful star—however 'talented', however intuitively 'right' her acting might be—more likely than not 'has never essentially been an actress but has created a furore on the stage in entirely the same way that a young girl creates a furore in social circles for one or two winters' (Crisis p. 70). If she has the makings of an actress, if 'in her immediate passion she is attuned to thought and idea' (Crisis p. 76) a genuine aesthete will none the less perceive that her time has not yet come.

It comes with what Kierkegaard calls 'the metamorphosis'. If she has feminine youthfulness merely 'in the ordinary sense' she will not be able to receive the metamorphosis. This will only occur if her genius corresponds to the *idea* of feminine youthfulness. If this is so then time, by stripping away the purely external bloom of youth, will in fact serve to make the idea more manifest. An actress who returns to the role of Juliet with the gain of maturity will play the part ideally. '... Now, in full and conscious, well-earned and dedicated command over her essential powers, she can in truth be the handmaiden of her idea. This is the essential aesthetic relation' (Crisis p. 89).

Although this review restricts itself to one single role it accords with Heiberg's emphasis on the importance of ideality, of form in higher dramatic art, and his analysis of the 'ironic' element in artistic ability.

The last review to be examined, completed but not published by Kierkegaard, also focuses on a particular actor in a particular role, namely Herr Phister in the comic role of Captain Scipio. Here the point is made straightforwardly: 'Herr Phister's forte is: *reflection*' (Crisis p. 110).

Phister's excellence in this sphere makes great demands on the critic who must himself learn to understand and reconstruct the reflection which

Phister puts into every detail of his performance: 'Admiration directed at reflection, must be expressed in the language of reflection, not that of immediacy. Reflection is this: Why?—because . . . Why is the whole thing constructed in this way?—because . . . Why is this little stroke here—it is because, etc. Everything is consciousness. Again, to admire is to be able to discover and understand the whole: Why?—because . . . True admiration in the relation between reflection and reflection (and only like understands like) is therefore complete understanding, neither more nor less' (Crisis p. 112).

Kierkegaard again contrasts this critical relationship of reflection and reflection to the popular response to art, which is crudely immediate, articulate only in interjections—Bravo, Bravissimo, etc. No more than Heiberg would Kierkegaard accept 'immediate grief and laughter' (JLH p. 131) as the standard of aesthetic criticism.

It is significant in the light of the Heibergian categorization of the genres of dramatic art that Phister, the reflective artist, is a comic actor. As we have seen comedy involves the negation of the immediacy of character. Comic character is character involved in self-contradiction. So Captain Scipio, the character in question, is a captain in the Papal Police. As such he already contains a contradiction. He is a soldier, he wears a military uniform and so lays claim to the grandeur and authority of the military—but he is also a policeman, a civilian, a civil servant, someone who is perhaps in charge of keeping the gutters and sewers unclogged (Crisis p. 116). In Phister's performance 'at every moment the civilian's mannerisms make the military officer's uniform ridiculous, or the civilian makes the soldier ridiculous' (Crisis p. 116).

There is a further contradiction. Though not a drunk Captain Scipio 'goes about . . . in a perpetual state of tipsiness' (Crisis p. 114). 'It is in a certain sense the easiest thing imaginable to portray a man who is drunk . . .' (Crisis p. 120) but Captain Scipio is not a burlesque drunk, he 'has approached the maximum at which he cannot get drunk' (Crisis p. 121). 'The problem of conveying . . . this is altogether more difficult than playing a drunk . . . it must never be directly seen that he is drunk, for he is not drunk in that way. The task therefore contains a contradiction: to present . . . a man who is drunk—and yet is not drunk . . .' (Crisis pp. 121f.). In the portrayal of this contradiction Phister's reflective genius is fully revealed.

The review is now moving in a completely reflective dimension. The role itself is reflective in its self-contradiction; the actor brings to the role his own reflective genius; the critic applies to the portrayal his appreciative reflection. But Kierkegaard goes one step further. The review has not been inspired by a current production of the play (*Ludovic*). 'This brief article is a recollection. It has been many years since its author saw *Ludovic* . . . The

usual theatre critics attend on the first evening that a new play is presented; and merely seeing it that one time is all they need in order to pass judgement' on an actor who has 'brought many months and all his genius, his thoughtfulness, his diligence to the interpretation of his role' (Crisis p. 126).

The review is thus an extreme sophistication of the philosophy of the dandy observing the patterns of his cigar smoke. It is cool, reflective, detached, and yet appreciative. This is the essence of Kierkegaard's—and Heiberg's—'taste'.

And yet Kierkegaard's philosophy is generally seen as a protest against just such a detached attitude, and he polemicizes continually against Hegelianism in general and Heiberg in particular. How is this to be explained? How do these theatrical reviews relate to the rest of his authorship?

Kierkegaard distinguished three fundamental modes in which people exist, which he called the aesthetic, the ethical and the religious. Sometimes he referred to these as different 'life-views', sometimes as 'stages' of human existence. His practice as a literary critic indicates what was for him the essence of the aesthetic stage. It is the life-view of the reflecteur who deliberately maintains a critical distance from the immediate object of consciousness in order to judge this object in the light of its relationship to ideality.

Within the sphere of aesthetics in the narrow sense Kierkegaard accepts the validity of this attitude. What he does not accept is its application to the personal life, by which a man comes to treat his own emotional and personal existence as he would treat a work of art. By emphasizing form and ideality as the key categories of aesthetics Kierkegaard places limitations on the power of art to give a total interpretation of human existence, which, as he sees it, is characterized by anxiety, despair, guilt and sin, and which demands commitment, concern, engagement of those who would exist authentically. Kierkegaard therefore rejects Heiberg's extension of the scope of art to the 'speculative' level, where it is endowed with the task of resolving the ultimate questions of religion and philosophy.⁹

But though Kierkegaard thus placed limitations upon the sphere of aesthetics these very limitations also mark out a realm in which the categories of art are valid. This, I believe, is also a pattern we can discern in his polemic against philosophy on behalf of faith. We should not over-emphasize the anti-humanistic, irrationalist element in Kierkegaard's thought. After all it is in the interest of reason itself to recognize its boundaries and in the interest of art not to confuse itself with reality.

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Lowrie, *Repetition* (O.U.P.), pp. xiii ff. Hereafter references are to 'Rep.' in brackets in the text. However the best is yet to come and the English-speaking reader will have to await the translation of *Prefaces* and diary-material relating to *Either-Or* and *Repetition* for a fuller picture of Kierkegaard's polemic against Heiberg.

³ P. Mitchell, *A History of Danish Literature* (Copenhagen, 1957), p. 135.

⁴ J. L. Heiberg, *Om Vaudeville* (Copenhagen, 1968), p. 32. Hereafter references are to 'JLH' in brackets in the text. Translations from this and other Danish titles are my own. The most comprehensive discussion of Heiberg available in English is H. Fenger, *The Heibergs* (New York, 1971).

⁵ J. L. Heiberg, *Grundtraek til Philosophiens Philosophie* (Copenhagen, 1832), p. 6.

⁶ Oluf Friis, *Poetisk Realisme og Romantisme in Dansk Litteratur Historie* (Copenhagen, 1965), Bd.2 p. 467.

⁷ S. Kierkegaard, tr. Swenson, *Either-Or*, Part I (Princeton, 1959), p. 88. Hereafter references are to 'E-O' in brackets in the text.

⁸ S. Kierkegaard, tr. Crites, *Crisis in the Life of an Actress* (New York, 1967). Hereafter referred to as 'Crisis' in brackets in the text. Crites' Introduction contains a useful discussion of Kierkegaard's relationship to the Heibergs, with particular reference to Kierkegaard's review of Fru Heiberg as Juliet.

⁹ Kierkegaard is particularly scathing about Heiberg's play *A Soul After Death*. A general indication of his understanding of the relationship between religion and poetry is given in *Stages on Life's Way*, tr. Lowrie, (O.U.P., 1940), pp. 363 ff.

WITTGENSTEIN'S AESTHETICS

Hartley Slater

SINCE THE publication of Wittgenstein's lectures on Aesthetics, there have been several attempts to categorize Wittgenstein in traditional terms, as a Subjectivist or Objectivist. Some commentators, of course, following Wittgenstein himself, have eschewed the use of 'big' terms and not pursued the traditional question. But others, impressed by his talk of interjections, or simply remembering the *Tractatus*, have labelled Wittgenstein a Subjectivist; while others, recalling Wittgenstein's talk of reasons, and his granting the central place in Aesthetics to the right and correct, have come to the conclusion he is best regarded as an Objectivist.

I think it is important not to throw the old question aside, but I also think one must take some care if one is to characterize Wittgenstein correctly. Through Wittgenstein's own later work on the emotions we have come to see that the 'no reasons for feelings' philosophy which grew out of the *Tractatus* must be modified, so to call the later Wittgenstein, for instance, a Subjectivist on the grounds that he thought critical judgements were quasi-exclamatory expressions of feeling, no longer can suffice. Nevertheless I think Wittgenstein is fairly to be assessed as a Subjectivist, of a sort; and given that the most considered, and recent, view of him has been the reverse I think it is of some importance to say and show why.

I

Harold Osborne ('Wittgenstein on Aesthetics' *British Journal of Aesthetics* 6 (1966), 385-90) was one of the first commentators to see the later Wittgenstein as a Subjectivist. Having little sympathy, however, with Wittgenstein's style of philosophizing, and being surprisingly uninformed about Wittgenstein's acquaintance with Art, Osborne was not inclined to see much of use in Wittgenstein's later contribution to critical theory. It was only too easy for the Objectivist Roger Shiner ('Wittgenstein on the Beautiful, the Good and the Tremendous' *British Journal of Aesthetics* 14 (1974), 258-71) to point out (p. 261) 'The resources of Wittgenstein's general position are less limited than he [Osborne] seems to have thought'.

Margaret Paton ('Wittgenstein and Problems of Objectivity in Aesthetics' *British Journal of Aesthetics* 7 (1967), 163-6) also saw Wittgenstein as still a Subjectivist. With a more sympathetic reading of the text, but holding in mind Tractarian conceptions of the emotions, she saw Wittgenstein's account of the role of reason in Aesthetics as confining it to the application

and interpretation of (arbitrary) rules. Shiner tended to agree with her (see p. 265) but felt that, elsewhere in Wittgenstein's writings, there was developed a notion of reason which could be brought in to change the picture.

With respect to Paton, Shiner had said (p. 262):

Reasons which are valid reasons only in terms of some antecedently accepted set of standards are but quasi-reasons. The concepts of reason and rationality, at least as they are normally used in philosophy, are intended to represent something which is coercive *per se*, and not coercive only to those who accept a certain set of assumptions.

He went on to remind us (p. 265) that (though *not* just outside the *Lectures*, see *Lectures* I 25–36) the later Wittgenstein developed a more mature understanding of rules, which saw them as more often informal, and always grounded in a culture's, or sub-culture's, practices. He saw (p. 267) that the prime model for these rules was Case Law; and he thought (p. 269) that in the case-by-case procedure he had found an objective basis not only for the sophisticated application of terms like 'dainty' and 'dumpy', but also, at a less articulate level, for the application of those critical adjectives supposedly typically found in the interjections of Lewy's landlady. "The difference between these terms and "dainty" or "dumpy" is not one of fundamental logic, but of scope and generality' (p. 270).

Unfortunately for Shiner, however, it was only in the Tractarian philosophy that the concepts of reason and rationality were intended to represent something which was coercive *per se*, and while, in later life, Wittgenstein did develop a broader conception of rule, the fact that its coercive power was then based on certain practices expressly gave him his 'anthropological mathematics', and meant that Wittgenstein never abandoned that picture of the situation presented in Moore's lecture notes (*Mind*, 1955, p. 19): 'Aesthetic discussions [are] like discussions in a court of law, where you try to "clear up the circumstances" of the action which is being tried, hoping that in the end what you say will "appeal to the judge"', and that 'if by giving reasons of this sort you make another person "see what you see" but it still "does not appeal to him" that is "an end" of the discussion'.

Remarkably, Shiner was fully aware that this was Wittgenstein's stated position on reasoning in Aesthetics (p. 267), and that where there is no reasoning but an interjection is forced from one it is a matter of direct appeal (p. 269), yet he still wanted to say that Wittgenstein (somewhere) 'exposed and undercut' this 'false picture' of reasoning (p. 268), so that a more consistent *Wittgensteinian* account, even in the interjection case, was his (Shiner's) Objectivist one. I think Shiner is misled primarily by Wittgenstein's admission that there are *reasons* in Aesthetics: one must remember 'reason' is used in many different ways (c.f. *Lectures* II 12–21). Wittgenstein says (Moore's notes, loc. cit.) 'reasons in Aesthetics are of the nature of further descriptions', so 'reasoning in Aesthetics is just drawing

attention to things'. Shiner is impressed by Wittgenstein's admission that the central question in Aesthetics is not 'Do you like this?' but 'Why do you like it?', but since the reason for a feeling is the object it is directed towards 'Why do you like it?', on the Wittgensteinian account, could be less misleadingly phrased, simply 'What do you like about it?'.

II

Wittgenstein went on, in Moore's notes, to say 'the same sort of reasons [are] given not only in Ethics but also in Philosophy' and this point has been made much of in recent Wittgensteinian accounts of *moral practices* (see, for instance, D. Z. Phillips and H. O. Mounce's *Moral Practices*, Routledge, 1970). One can also take up the point with respect to *philosophical practices*: 'I am in a sense making propaganda for one style of thinking as opposed to another. I am honestly disgusted with the other . . . How much we are doing is changing the style of thinking and how much I'm doing is changing the style of thinking and how much I'm doing is persuading people to change their style of thinking' (*Lectures III* 37, 40).

Saying, in Philosophy, things like 'You talk in entirely different terms of the Coronation Robes of Edward II and a dress suit' is indeed very different from discussing whether Subjectivism is correct. Using the direct parallel with Aesthetics, one might say the former concerns the 'dainty' and 'dumpy' in Philosophy, and the discriminations and judgements which only someone with an improved philosophical sensibility can make; the latter concerns more general, perhaps more weighty, but certainly cruder discriminations which 'Lewy's landlady' might be satisfied with.

There is a delight in both styles of philosophy, as I see the matter, so I see a continuity in Wittgenstein's thought on Aesthetics with the subjectivist, non-reasoning, outlook of the *Tractatus* developing and refining itself into the subjectivist reasoning stance of the later work. But, since Philosophy is ultimately a matter of style, the pure later-Wittgensteinians often still refuse to sully themselves with the grander Metaphysical questions and see no overall viewpoint in their master. And some Metaphysicians have yet to learn to spill ink in more than one way, and have difficulty labelling the later Wittgenstein correctly, because he certainly was not a Subjectivist in the traditional sense. Wittgenstein allowed there was a place for reasoned debate in Aesthetics and so was not as abject a Subjectivist as, say, the Positivists of the thirties; but reasoning in Aesthetics did not, for Wittgenstein, establish *conclusions*, it had more the function of sensitizing people to ways of appreciating things.

III

But we can go on. For one of the characteristics of the conceptual analysis which was Wittgenstein's later concern in Philosophy was its *factual* basis: one *wouldn't* talk of appreciating the *tremendous* things in Art, that's a

fact, a fact to be verified, if necessary, by Austin's methods of consulting dictionaries or other language users. Likewise in Ethics there are conceptual and factual studies: Shiner refers with respect to Bob Newell's paper 'Ethics and Description' in *Philosophy* XLIII (1968) in which (certain kinds of) evaluations are rated as descriptive—he might also have mentioned Mrs. Foot's seminal 'Goodness and Choice' in *Aristotelian Society Supplementary Volume* XXXV (1961), in which the factual nature of 'good pens', 'good farmers', 'good fathers' and the like is explained, or Wittgenstein's own 'Lecture on Ethics' in *Philosophical Review* LXXIV (1965) where a similar point is made (pp. 5, 6).

Now it is undoubted that similar objective issues, involving discernment, categorizing and grading, arise in Aesthetics. (And, of course, there are historical, sociological and biographical facts in all three disciplines.) The critics Hanslick, Frye and Leavis, for instance, whom Shiner praises as men of judgement, have, through their scholarship and perception, been able to gain for us a better knowledge of, amongst other things, what good novels are (given, in this case, for a start, that 'novels' as opposed to 'romances' involve development of character), and their intellectual differences, where these are *intellectual* differences, may be put down to differences in fineness of discrimination, or reflective powers, or maybe simply the used definition of words. But this must not make us, as it perhaps made Shiner, think that Aesthetics is an Objective science. If Aesthetics were simply the *study* of Art it would more likely be so, but Aesthetics, surely, centrally involves *participation* with Art: the aesthetic value we attach to certain things is shown by the place of those things in our lives. So the question still remains in Aesthetics whether we are to read (or write) romances rather than novels, just as the question remains in Ethics whether we are to have a matriarchal society or a society in which fatherhood has its full place, and just as the question remains in Philosophy whether we are to attend to current linguistic niceties or construct ways of thinking about things. These are some of the *ultimate* questions with regard to these human practices (they are questions of 'absolute value' as opposed to 'relative value' to use the terminology of Wittgenstein's lecture on Ethics) and it is surely in recognition of this their fundamental place that Wittgenstein ranks Aesthetics, Ethics, and Philosophy as all, at heart, Subjective.

There is a robust philistinism which is expressed in the well-known line 'I don't know much about Art, but I do know what I like'. The danger is that, in standing up for the value of culture, and insisting that likes and dislikes are not the only issues to do with Art, we should forget that, in several senses they are still the first ones. Although we should guard against unenlightened crudity in feeling, action and thought, we must also guard against that effete intellectualism which might find expression in 'I know so much about Art/Morals/Philosophy, I don't know what I like/what I shall do/what I think'.

THE RATIONALITY OF AESTHETIC RESPONSES

Stephen Davies

IN ROGER SCRUTON'S *Art and Imagination*¹ an attempt is made to meet the two most crucial difficulties facing a characterization of aesthetic experience as objective and rational. The theory developed there is both detailed and sophisticated and I will discuss only a few key passages from the book, but it is fair to say, I think, that most of *Art and Imagination* is directed towards the solution of these difficulties. Few writers in aesthetics have recognized the force of these difficulties, and fewer still have argued so convincingly against them. In this paper I will criticize some of Scruton's arguments, suggesting that, whilst his theory of aesthetic appreciation finds application to representational art it cannot be generalized, as he hopes,² to the non-representational arts which include, as Scruton himself has argued,³ music.

The problems to which I have referred above are as follows: (1) Establishing that the work of art is the emotional-object of the aesthetic response and that, therefore, the responder may justify his response by referring to features of the work of art. This is the problem of establishing the rationality of aesthetic responses. (2) Determining the (public) grounds on which the aesthetic response may be identified by others as, say, one of sadness.

The importance of these problems for an objective account of aesthetic understanding can readily be appreciated. If the work of art does not stand to the aesthetic response as its emotional-object, the response could not indicate the responder's understanding and appreciation of the work of art. If the work of art is merely the perceptual-object of the response and its cause, then the work of art is merely the occasion for the response. The responder's description of the work of art would serve to identify the cause of his response, but it would not serve to justify the appropriateness of that response because it would not show that the responder believed the work of art to display the response-relevant features. Furthermore, if other people could not identify the responder's response, it could be argued that he would be unable to identify his own response and that there would be no way of justifying anyone's identification of the response. In that case there could be no test of the appropriateness of aesthetic responses and no justification for any particular response to a work of art. Unless these

difficulties can be met it will be impossible for the objectivist to maintain that aesthetic responses are rational and subject to justification.

In the Kenny/Wilson account⁴ of the relation between emotions and their emotional-objects, the relation is secured by the responder's *beliefs* about the emotion-relevant properties of the emotional-object. One believes that the emotional-object instantiates the formal object of the emotional response. Now, many aesthetic responses to works of art involve the appropriate beliefs. If one is delighted by the work's ingenuity, then one believes that the work instantiates the formal object of delight. But when the response is to that which is represented or expressed in a work of art, one does *not* believe that the work of art instantiates the formal object of one's response. For example, if the formal object of sadness is 'a situation which is viewed as both unfortunate and regrettable' and one's response of sadness is to that which is represented or expressed in a work of art, then the work of art could not be the emotional-object of one's response because one does *not* believe that that which is represented or expressed instantiates the formal object, as characterized, of sadness. If one is saddened by a poor waif in a picture as a result of entertaining without belief the actuality of the scene depicted, then one does not believe that there really is a sad waif in a situation which is both unfortunate and regrettable. And if one responds to the sadness of a musical work by feeling sad, then one does not believe that there is anything unfortunate and regrettable about the music or that which is expressed in it. Now, important as the responses which involve the appropriate beliefs are, it is the aesthetic responses to that which is represented or expressed in art (where the emotion-relevant beliefs are lacking) which usually would be taken as an index of the responder's understanding and appreciation of the work of art, and, according to the Kenny/Wilson account, the work of art does not stand to such responses as their emotional-object.

Scruton develops his account of aesthetic responses through a discussion of representational painting.⁵ He argues as follows: there are many things we might imagine of a representational painting. Where the imagination is directed towards the end of understanding the painting aesthetically, rather than towards the end of mere self-entertainment, then what must knowingly be imagined is that the scene depicted is actual; that is, one make-believes or entertains without belief the thought that one is a witness to an actual scene. Of course, when a person views a painting of a poor-looking waif he does *not* believe that he is a witness to an actual scene. He can, however, see the painting *as if* it were the scene depicted and must then (knowingly) imagine being a witness to it. As a result he may imagine feelings of tenderness towards the child depicted. He justifies and explains his response by referring to those features which, if they were (believed to be) actual, would usually count to justify the equivalent 'real' emotional

response; that is, a feeling of tenderness (with its natural accompaniment of desires) towards an actual waif. But in the case of the aesthetic response, the reality of the scene is entertained and not believed and, likewise, the emotional response (and the accompanying desires) are entertained rather than acted upon. Even though the viewer may *feel* the tenderness, the desires which accompany his feeling are merely entertained and the aesthetic response lacks the normal forms of expression of such desires in action, as would occur normally in the case of a 'real' feeling of tenderness towards an actual waif.

In Scruton's account, the scene whose reality is (knowingly) entertained stands to the aesthetic response in exactly the same way that a corresponding actual scene would stand to the corresponding 'real' response, as its emotional-object. In other words, Scruton is challenging the Kenny/Wilson account of the emotion/emotional-object relation by suggesting that, whilst paradigmatically the emotion/emotional-object relation is secured by belief, it may equally be secured by make-belief (by imaginatively entertained, or unasserted, thought). He is suggesting that the nature of aesthetic responses clearly suggests that the Kenny/Wilson account specifies the emotion/emotional-object relation too narrowly. Everything about the aesthetic response suggests that it takes the work of art as its emotional-object. If the Kenny/Wilson account leads us to deny that the work of art is the emotional-object where the response is to that which is represented, since that response is not based on a belief in the actuality of the scene, then it is more sensible to recommend that the Kenny/Wilson account be amended than it is to accept the (absurd) consequences which follow from the view that such responses do not take the work of art as their emotional-object. If we accept that the emotion/emotional-object relation can be secured by the imagination in its quasi-belief form, there will be no difficulty in maintaining that aesthetic responses to representational art are rational to the extent that they may be supported by reference to features of the work of art (whose actuality is knowingly entertained rather than believed).

This argument appears to meet the difficulties which may have been thought to arise in characterizing the subject depicted in a representational painting as the emotional-object of an aesthetic response to that subject. However, Scruton hopes to generalize this account of aesthetic responses to cover the case in which one responds to a non-representational work of art. Thus he must argue that responses to non-representational art, where response-relevant beliefs are not involved, rest on response-relevant make-beliefs. Scruton does argue that hearing a succession of notes as a melody involves the imagination in much the same way that perceiving the person depicted in a representational painting involves the imagination,⁶ but, even if this claim is accepted, it can be argued that Scruton is unable convinc-

ingly to account for the rationality of aesthetic responses to non-representational art.

It is not self-evidently nonsensical to entertain without belief the experience-embodied thought of the scene depicted in a representational work of art as actual. Any depiction of a scene could be the depiction of an actual scene.⁷ As Scruton indicates, there is an obvious aesthetic point to such make-believing. But non-representational art presents no 'content' on which the imagination can operate in a similar (quasi-belief) fashion. There is nothing that one might imagine of a non-representational work of art *with the aim of understanding it aesthetically* which could serve to make it the emotional-object of one's response. The critical case is the one in which one responds to the expressiveness of a non-representational work of art. If the work is expressive (and is experienced as such), there is nothing that one need knowingly to imagine before one can respond to that expressiveness or before one's response can be indicative of one's understanding and appreciation of the work's expressiveness. In particular, one need not imagine an emotional-object for the emotion heard in the work (that is, there is no thought of the work's being, say, sad *about* something), nor a subject who feels the emotion expressed in the work (that is, there is no thought of someone's feeling the emotion expressed in the work), before one can respond to that expressiveness. And if the work of art is *not* expressive, what could one knowingly imagine of it with the aim of understanding it aesthetically? Not that it is representational, let alone that what it 'represents' is actual. Anything that one imagined or came to feel as a result of imagining would be essentially unconnected with the content of the non-representational work of art and one's response would not reflect one's understanding and appreciation of it.

Representational art provides a subject upon which it is aesthetically appropriate (and necessary) to exercise the imagination in its quasi-belief form. The subject controls and restricts the imagination to that which is in the work of art where one's interest in the work of art is an aesthetic one, allowing that, whilst the response rests on what one make-believes, the response is aesthetic since it does not go beyond that which is given in the work of art. But non-representational art provides no such subjects, so that anything one make-believed would lead one away from the work of art and render non-aesthetic responses founded imaginatively. One's aesthetic response to the expressiveness of a non-representational work involves neither response-relevant beliefs (such as a belief that a person's feeling is being expressed), nor response-relevant thoughts entertained without belief (such as a make-belief that a person's feeling is being expressed). The expressiveness perceived in the work of art is neither believed nor imagined to be the emotional-object of one's aesthetic response.

It might be thought that this criticism of Scruton's account applies also

to the case where one responds aesthetically to that which is expressed in representational art (rather than to that which is expressed, say, on the face of the person depicted). Scruton has argued⁸ that, because that which is expressed in representational art is expressed through that which is represented, the response to the expressiveness in a representational work of art necessarily is founded on thoughts entertained without belief. This point may be conceded, I think, without accepting that the make-belief on which a response to that which is represented is founded serves also to make the expressiveness in the work of art the emotional-object of the response.

At the first-person level we can note some important differences between 'real' emotions and the equivalent aesthetic responses. The tenderness that one feels when viewing a painting of a poor-looking waif differs in some respects from the tenderness that one feels towards an actual waif. Neither belief nor desire is present in the tenderness that one feels towards the depicted waif, whereas both are very much a part of one's feeling towards the actual child. One feels tenderness towards the actual waif because one believes that it feels miserable and in need of comfort, but there is nothing that one similarly believes of the depicted waif when one feels tenderness towards it. If one's tenderness towards the actual waif is genuine, one also desires to comfort it and will (sometimes) act on this desire. Certainly one would not wish to revel in its misery. But if the painting makes one feel tenderness, one does not therefore desire to comfort the depiction of the child or to put an end to the misery one sees represented there. In the case of aesthetic responses to works of art, the absence of the felt-desires which normally accompany an emotion leads to the absence of the behavioural expression of those desires through action. However, despite these recognized differences, one has no difficulty in identifying one's response to the painting. When one is moved by the depiction of the child one does not feel something *like* tenderness, something one calls tenderness for the want of a better name. It is not *as if* one feels tenderness.

When we turn to a consideration of others' identification of one's response to a work of art, the differences recorded above take on more significance. Usually another person's feeling is identified by his behaviour: His behaviour may point to his emotion's object and its emotion-relevant features, or it may indicate that he feels desires relevant to some emotion. But if the response is a response to a work of art, it is not obvious how another's response could be identified as, say, one of tenderness. He *may* show some behavioural expressions of an emotion (he may look as if he feels tenderness) and/or he may say that he feels tenderness.⁹ But, *if* he does show signs of his emotion, his behaviour does not point to his having an emotional-object, nor does it indicate that he has any felt-desires. His

behaviour usually identifies the work of art as the *perceptual*-object of his response, but it may not be clear from his behaviour what he takes the emotion-relevant features of the work of art to be. Moreover, his behaviour does not point to his having emotion-relevant desires. Where the response is an aesthetic one, others are denied the usual means by which they identify another's emotion. How then are aesthetic responses identified by others if not in the usual way?

Scruton attempts to resolve this apparent difficulty in the following manner.¹⁰ The responder entertains the actuality of that which is depicted in the work of art, thus making that which is depicted the emotional-object of his response. Moreover, he knowingly *entertains* the emotion-relevant desires which, because they are merely entertained, do not issue in action. We identify another's aesthetic response to a representational work of art by identifying the emotion-relevant features of the emotional-object (whose actuality is knowingly entertained) and his entertained desires. These are apparent in his description of the work of art rather than, as in the standard case, in his behaviour. Which is not to say that we simply accept his report of feeling, say, tenderness. We can ask him to justify his response and, in doing so, he tells us of his entertained desires and of the emotion-relevant features he perceives without belief in the work of art. We identify his response not by what he does (as in the paradigm case), since he probably does nothing, but by what his description of the work says he would do *if* he believed he were a witness to a corresponding actual scene. Where the response is an aesthetic one, our access to another's emotional response is through that which he says rather than that which he does. We identify another's emotional aesthetic response by the same criteria by which we identify a 'real' emotional response; that is, by his desires and his characterization of the emotion-relevant features of the emotional-object. What distinguishes the two cases is our means of access to these criteria, not the criteria themselves. The difference in the means of access to the criteria follows from the fact that, whereas the 'real' response is founded on belief, the response to the representational work of art is founded on make-belief, thoughts entertained without belief in the actuality of the depicted scene.

In his account of aesthetic responses Scruton does not distinguish between two apparently different cases; namely, the case in which the responder *feels* an emotion and the case in which the responder imagines what he would want to say and do if he did feel some emotion. He does not distinguish between them because the desires which are a part of the felt-response and of the knowingly imagined response are in both cases merely entertained. Whilst acknowledging the phenomenological difference between these two kinds of aesthetic response, Scruton argues that we must be concerned primarily with the way in which the emotional

character of aesthetic responses is recognized by others.¹¹ The emotional character of the two types of aesthetic response are recognized in the same way—through the responder's description of the work of art and of his entertained desires. Thus, in the most crucial respect, the two types of aesthetic responses are indistinguishable.

Whilst accepting that these two types of response may be identified by others in the same way, it is difficult to agree that their differences are unimportant. In discussing aesthetic responses to non-representational art I will argue that the difference between the two types of response is crucial because, unlike the felt-response, the response in which the feeling is merely entertained is always a non-aesthetic response. If we think of the difference between the two responses only as a difference between *feeling* an emotion and *thinking* what an emotion would *feel* like, then we may be inclined to think of them as very similar. But imagining having a desire or an emotion usually involves thinking out its setting, causal origin and likely end-result in action, *not* thinking what the emotion or desire would feel like. The importance of the difference becomes clearer when it is recognized that it is the difference between feeling an emotion and merely thinking (under the control of the work of art) of a context for the emotion and the consequences of feeling it. Would we be inclined to say that a person understood art, including representational art, if he never responded to it by feeling emotions, that is, if all his responses were merely entertained?

When the aesthetic response to the sadness expressed in a non-representational work of art is a feeling of sadness, then that response is accompanied by neither entertained nor 'real' sadness-relevant desires. Neither the work of art nor that which is expressed in it provide subjects towards or about which one can knowingly imagine the desires which normally accompany a feeling of sadness. When one responds to that which is depicted in a representational painting as if it were actual, the painting supplies a represented subject towards which one can entertain desires appropriate to the character of one's response. But recognizing the expressiveness of a non-representational work of art does not depend on, say, knowingly entertaining the thought that through it is expressed the artist's or anyone else's felt-emotion. Because non-representational art is not appreciated as expressing, in general, anyone's felt-emotions, responses to the expressiveness perceived in non-representational art are accompanied by neither imagined nor 'real' desires. Reference to desires plays no part in the identification of such a response.

Of course, one might imagine all sorts of things in the presence of a non-representational work of art and, as a result of such imaginings, one might feel emotions accompanied by the appropriate, entertained desires. These desires can be described in the context of that which was imagined,

but not within the context provided by the work of art. In such a case the work of art is merely the occasion for the response which is not, therefore, an aesthetic response. When the case of aesthetic responses to the expressiveness of non-representational art is considered the importance of the difference between responses which are merely entertained and responses which are felt becomes apparent. Where the response is not felt it will be accompanied by the appropriate, entertained desires, for it will be these desires and the nature of the entertained emotional-object which ultimately serve to make the response identifiable as some particular feeling. But a person responding to a non-representational work of art has no such desires; to describe such desires would be to supply an emotional-object for the response which could not be located in the work of art and would, therefore, indicate that the response was a non-aesthetic one. If the response to the expressiveness of a non-representational work of art is an aesthetic one, then that emotional response must be felt rather than merely entertained. Non-representational art leads us to feel emotions; it does not lead us to think what we would say or do if we felt some emotion in a given situation.

The above argument would also apply, I think, in the case where a person responds to that which is expressed in a representational work of art, *given* that what was expressed was an emotion. But it may well be the case that, rather than expressing emotions, representational art more often expresses thoughts about or attitudes to that which it represents. If so, an aesthetic response to that which is expressed in a representational work of art may be entertained rather than felt because the expressiveness is about, as well as arising from, the subject represented.

In the preceding I have argued that, whilst Scruton's approach might comfortably explain how a representational work of art is the emotional-object of an aesthetic response to that which it depicts and that such responses may be identified by others, his solution to the difficulties under consideration cannot, as he hopes, be extended to accommodate non-representational art. In particular, it is aesthetic responses to the expressiveness perceived in non-representational works of art which resists the type of theory that he has proposed. The rejection of Scruton's general theory of aesthetic responses reinstates the problem of establishing the rationality of aesthetic responses to non-representational art. Must we conclude that the appreciation of the expressiveness in non-representational art is non-rational, or can the difficulties under consideration be removed by some other theory?

Elsewhere I have argued that aesthetic responses to music's expressiveness may be justified and identified and the account offered might well be generalized to cover other forms of non-representational art.¹² In this paper I am concerned primarily with the discussion of Scruton's views,

rather than with alternative solutions to the difficulties raised. In the following I will merely sketch the direction which an alternative theory might take.

Kenny and Wilson treat responses lacking emotional-objects as rare and even aberrant. Whilst it can readily be conceded that, in the paradigm case, responses take emotional-objects, it may be that responses lacking emotional-objects are more common than they allow. Moreover, it may be argued that, although such object-less responses cannot be justified as a response to an emotional-object is justified, it does not follow that all such object-less responses are non-rational. What follows, of course, is that if such object-less responses can be justified, the way in which they are justified differs from that in which responses which take emotional-objects are justified. The rationality of such an object-less response may be established by arguing that no other, equally object-less response to the same perceptual-object would be accepted as appropriate or natural. Thus it could be argued that, when one responds aesthetically to a non-representational work of art by feeling a sadness mirrored in the expressiveness of the work of art, the justification for that response takes the form of demonstrating that no other, equally object-less, response would be accepted as appropriate by those who appreciate the work of art. In practice, the justification of such a response involves a description of the work of art as expressive of the feeling mirrored in the response.

One's aesthetic response to the expressiveness of non-representational art cannot be identified by others in terms of its emotional-object, since no such emotional-object is believed in or entertained, nor by one's desires, since such desires are neither felt nor entertained. Sometimes, at least, one's response must be identifiable because one looks as one feels (as well as reporting how one feels). This view faces an apparent difficulty: comparatively few feelings, when shorn of the behaviour which points to their emotional-objects and which acts out the desires felt towards those objects, have behavioural expressions sufficiently distinctive to permit the identification (by others) of the feeling. However, it may be argued that the range of aesthetically appropriate responses to the expressiveness of non-representational art is restricted to just those responses which may be so identified, and that this restriction corresponds not coincidentally with the range of emotions which may be expressed in non-representational art.

REFERENCES

- ¹ Methuen, 1974.
- ² *Art and Imagination*, p. 238.
- ³ 'Representation in Music', *Philosophy*, Vol. 51 (1976), pp. 273-287.
- ⁴ A. Kenny, *Action, Emotion and Will* (Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1963);
- J. R. S. Wilson, *Emotion and Object* (Cambridge, U.P., 1972).
- ⁵ *Art and Imagination*, see especially pp. 128-133.

⁶ Ibid., especially Chapter 12.

⁷ Obviously the notion of actuality cannot be applied crudely, especially where the point of the painting may require an appreciation of the way in which the depicted world departs from the real world. It would be mistaken to entertain the thought that Chagall's wing-less horses are *falling* from the sky, for example. More important difficulties may be raised by the representation of logically impossible scenes, as in many of Escher's works, but I will pass such problems by.

⁸ Op. cit., pp. 233–237.

⁹ Scruton makes a further point (ibid., p.

132): that the sincerity of an emotional response to a work of art can be tested against the person's future behaviour and responses in 'real' situations. But it should be noted that *usually* to describe a response to a work of art as insincere is to claim that that response is non-aesthetic. We do not, as Scruton implies, accept the possibility of insincere, aesthetically proper responses.

¹⁰ Ibid., especially pp. 128–133.

¹¹ Ibid., pp. 131–2.

¹² 'The Expression of Emotion in Music', *Mind*, Vol. 89 (1980), pp. 67–86.

KITSCH

Philip Crick

It is a surprise to find how, in the biological realm, the endlessly evolving forms of life appear as anticipations of distinctive forms of human social behaviour. Ignorant of the slur which we place upon them and of the effect they have upon our metaphors, parasites such as ivy, mistletoe, or the pernicious flea, pronounce the joys that can be gained just by shaping one's life around the life style of a host. Why struggle for support or food when you can get someone else to do all the hard work for you? Such is the question parasitism suggests. A refutation of the argument is hard to find.

The price which the parasite pays for its upkeep is dependence, but offered such support by a more energetic organism, all else follows. Generally, in the natural world the right degree of maintenance is forthcoming; but should the host die, then the parasite will probably follow suit. The key fact in this sort of relationship is that it is a very one-way affair, and irreversible.

In human culture, a nearly identical partnership is that which holds between Art and Kitsch. They are interinvolved, but in an irreversible mode. Lift, for example, all trace of Kitsch from a society and Art would still be able to flourish. It might, indeed, expand its range and become more successful. Extract, however, Art from the structure of a culture—prize out its nervous system—and, after a sufficient pause, any sign of Kitsch would also vanish. Perhaps in this instance the culture might vanish, too.

What, then, are the characteristics of Kitsch as a phenomenon which define and ensure its dependency on Art as the prior form? The etymology of this powerful German word may here help. According to Gillo Dorfles¹ there are three possible sources of its meaning. It has been argued by some that Kitsch is related to the English word 'sketch', and it is plain that there could at least be a certain kind of semantic affinity active. Elsewhere, the word has been attributed to the German: 'etwas verkitschen', meaning to 'knock off cheaply'. Dorfles also quotes Giesz as connecting Kitsch to 'kitschen', as in the phrase 'strassenschlamm zusammenscharren'—literally to collect rubbish off the street.

Strassenschlamm, then, can only be given full definition by describing in what ways the host of the parasite is different from the dependent body, in

the technological sense, as for example, by contrasting the status of beer with the discarded beer can, or a bus bearing passengers with a driverless wreck on a scrap-heap. This method of description is one of negation, of listing in what ways the good product, the authentic object, is not the same as the vessel which once conformed to its shape and its transit, and in what ways the host surpasses the parasitic form. In consequence a negative definition of Kitsch is possible by looking first at Art, broadly conceived, and then by contrast noting the characteristics of the parasite of Art in order that one can clearly state what Art is *not*, and what characteristics, traits, and tendencies Art does *not* have. By this device, the contours of the work of art and the overt outline of Strassenschlamm or Kitsch may, with each other in the mind, be brought to part company, and to stand out against each other in their fundamental difference and in their essential tension.

Firstly, then, a work of art, although always the product of thought and imagination and, of course, very hard work, is not *deliberative*. The creative artist never sets out to calculate responses, for calculation would inevitably destroy the spontaneous character which enters into the development of the artefact. The creative act, the work of making the poem, the painting, the sculpture, does not preclude reason or reasoning; but the intellect combines with and fuses into the passionate element throughout the process, under a principle which ensures that the completed work will submit itself to an open and diverse response on the part of each differing perceiver. A work of art does not make use of its understanding of the nature of the medium being employed to *control* the psyche of the responding individual, as is the case in the sophisticated product of advertising on television where Kitsch photography and montage both of shot and of speech are the order of the day. Art does not seek to manipulate. It does not take up a position of *power* in relation to the recipient, as advertising will. It does not see the properties of the language of the medium as a weapon of approach. The artist is not self-conscious in that sense. Calculation as to effect will always mean that one who does so also calculates the precise reward of that effect. Calculation of effect is also the path to the manifestation of the sentimental. In Kitsch, deliberation and indulgence walk hand in hand, as courtier and courtesan. Flattery is its essence. To quote Herman Broch²: 'In a broad sense Art always reflects the image of contemporary men, and if Kitsch represents falsehood (it is so often defined and rightly so) this falsehood falls back on the person in need of it, or the person who uses this highly considerate mirror so as to be able to recognize himself in the counterfeit image that it throws out at him and to confess his own lies (with a delight which is to a certain extent sincere).'

Secondly, Art knows nothing of closure. The artefact may sometimes be simple; but it is never simplistic. Art does not insult the complexity of nature and of Man through an act of reduction. Nor is there any finality in

a true work of art, either in its internal state, nor when it is experienced from the outside. The completed form of the work, its structural harmony, is a resolution of conflicting forces in the originator—a momentary resolution, not a terminal fusion of those forces. In its external aspect, the artefact gives the observer or participant work to do. It puts questions, starts a mystery, inseminates the observer with new unforeseen questions, leaves itself open, leaves itself exposed to the world like a flower; all this, while giving delight; whereas a Kitsch product is final in quality, says one borrowed definite thing, and then, no more. It arouses certain secondary pleasures in those who crave Kitsch but asks no questions, is unmysterious and shallowly explicit. Kitsch is very much a by-product of social anxiety, and tries very hard to reassure. It seeks to protect both its maker and its consumer from the rigour of the real. Art never soothes, but the ambition of Kitsch is to become an emotional salve, or stimulus. In achieving this ambition, the use of finality and its urge to set strict boundaries to all meaning, deprive it of integrity. The manufacturer of a Kitsch artefact does not set his own conflicts at risk in the heart of the composition. Therefore, there is nothing to resolve. Therefore his work is formless. The manufacturer of a Kitsch object does not project himself into the work, except in a most superficial sense. The facade behind which he hides is a static mask.

The third negation of Kitsch is a double negation. Art is never un-self-referenced. Kitsch, on the other hand, bears the stamp of its own ignorance. Whenever a Kitsch product falsely offers itself as a work of art, analysis of it gives no evidence that the work anywhere knows itself to be a work of art. The authentic work knows itself to be such because the creator of it discovers as he goes along that he is a maker of the new (and not just the maker of a novelty). There is always concrete evidence within a work of art of a technical kind which will show on inspection that not only is the artist engaged in a *search* but that he is searching with a method which is provisional in its essence. Moreover, this note of provisionality always enters into the expressive form which the act of search takes. Such an attitude shows what it means to assert that a work of art is self-aware. It is just one step beyond this from self-awareness to self-reference. Self-awareness of this tentative order ensures that the work of art will indirectly *comment upon* its own use of the medium. It will show itself to exist in a state of tension with its own technical means, and its own specific cultural inheritance.

A further aspect of the self-referencing function resides in the fact that a work of art, simply by existing in its 'resolved' state, can be seen by observers to relate both to past works by the same artist, and to those which will emerge in the future. The relationship articulates the general quest of that artist. Kitsch can never exemplify either search or quest in this sense.

The third great difference between Art and Kitsch occurs in the sphere of decoration. Art is not self-indulgently decorative. In a Kitsch product, there is no inner formal necessity between the ornamental element and motif. The decoration is used simply as cosmetic to whatever is being centrally presented.

It is decoration offered in the spirit of a cover, or a veil, a flamboyancy. It is inevitably a borrowed vestment drawing on the prestige of the former artistic movement. Although certain forms of art may be classed as decorative in character, this does not mean in these cases that the decorative accent has lost contact with the structural component. In such forms, structure serves decoration but engages in a dialogue with it. They are interdependent forces. But in the Kitsch phenomenon, the structural element, if any, simply *co-exists* with the decorative, and vice versa. Each is a mechanistically conceived component added one to another in the manner of a series of transfers.

The last and fifth major contrastive difference between the two modes of making is to some extent a continuation by other means of the issue of decoration. A work of art, if looked at in terms of its ritualistic aspect, is never *ritualistic without substance*. The ritualism of Kitsch, however, gives full reign to the resources of human fancy and fantasy without regard to the traditional base of accredited ritual. The authenticity of the ritual domain in Art is derived from its historical validity—the ideological validity of the field of ritual reference at the time at which any given work of art invoking it is made. A work of art can, of course, evoke past ritualistic forms, not (as may be the case) as quotation, but rather in the form of celebrating the climate of a previous epoch and its value-system. But whenever that happens, it will treat the material referred to in the language of the present and not just naïvely import the ritual mode unaltered. Kitsch imports, and borrows, intact. Art alludes, and transforms.

There are movements in history where these last two distinctions between Kitsch and Art are not as clearcut as words might choose to have them. For example, in the Pre-Raphaelite movement, the intense longing for a chivalric utopia, located not in the future but in a hypothetical feudal epoch—a dreamt Middle Age—produces painting in which the decorative and ritualistic urge gives rise to work which inhabits the complex frontier territory which lies between the genuine and the specious. Pre-Raphaelitism was a movement which attracted bona fide artists, and poetasters of the easel, as well. The whole movement wavers between the world of the meretricious and the world of the integral. The minting of gold and of counterfeit went on uncritically together.

Contemporary consciousness, however, does not allow a similar non-discrimination. To quote Herman Broch³ once again: 'Modern artists are acutely aware of those who counterfeit their work and many have reacted to their plagiarists with ingenious élan.' The difference from the

nineteenth-century state of affairs must in part be owing to the ripening of the mass society and to the consequent huge growth and development of Kitch as a human activity and as an industry over the last one hundred and fifty years.

Today, Kitch is the flourishing formula of a mass culture. Its presence can be detected in every social practice from religion, through all media-commercials, to athletics, even. Kitch is the great hedonist vehicle of our time, a parasite now grown to leviathan maturity, while the host on which it feeds remains comparatively small. But to this depressing fact there is an opposing optimistic parable. In certain Latin American countries, the scourge of extreme poverty has brought into being a type of artist-craftsman, who lacking all plant or technology has taken to recycling chosen items of garbage (Strassenschlamm) into new and beautiful and useful individualized products, such as oil-lamps, which are sold at local street-markets. They are sold not (yet) to tourists, but to ordinary local people.

This model of creative courage in which an innovation drawn from the uninviting gutter of industrial waste breeds beauty alongside utility, has something in common with the way in which Western artists have taken up facets of the enormous Kitch output in their own culture and through a deft act of allusive irony incorporated them into fresh aesthetic statements. Modern art therefore engages in a crucial if low-key dialogue with its feverish parasite. On each occasion where that irony is manifested a work of art becomes a work of criticism, and a work of criticism becomes a work of art.

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THE NON-DELUSIVE ILLUSION OF LITERARY ART

Dorothy Walsh

I

ILLUSION CONCERNS appearance in the sense of seeming or semblance; delusion is a matter of false belief. Admittedly, this distinction is not always adhered to in contemporary discourse but it is not, I think, mere pedantry to insist upon it. We need this distinction for an understanding of the role of illusion in art.

Since man is a creature who, if sighted, depends more on vision than any other sense experience to find his way in the world, reference to 'appearance' will initially suggest visual appearance. It is also the case that the distinction between delusive and non-delusive appearances is most familiar with reference to the visual. Yet even here it will not do to identify illusions as the sub-class of appearances that are delusive, for there are non-delusive appearances. Prime examples of delusive illusions are hallucinations and ordinary mistakings, such as mistaking a shadow for a person lurking in a doorway. Such illusions can be suddenly dispelled and are then not recoverable. A necessary condition for a non-delusive illusion is constancy. The distant hills appear blue, the stick partly immersed in water appears bent, and so on. Whatever explanation may be offered, plausible or fantastic, practical experience can lead to discounting a constant illusion. The illusions of art are a distinctive kind of non-delusive illusion. We are not deluded by the appearance but, at the same time, we experience no temptation to discount it or to explain it away. On the contrary, it commands our attention.

The purpose of this paper is to consider the primary non-delusive illusion of literary art. The example of the theatre provides a link with familiar visual illusion. I am not here referring to scenic investiture which, though often elaborate, can be dispensed with. Not so the art of the actor or actress which creates the illusion of thought, emotion, and action, in short, what Susanne Langer characterizes as the illusion of lived experience or 'virtual life'.¹ It is essentially the same kind of illusion that is evoked by the literary text, not simply the text of the play but the text of the novel, story, epic and, indeed lyrical poem where there is a speaker and a situation. What literary art provides, through the actual experience of en-

counter with the work is the illusion of 'living through' what the work presents, narrates, displays, or otherwise voices.

I shall hope, in this paper, to recommend the notion of the non-delusive illusion of literary art by showing its usefulness in dealing with two of the many questions that can be raised about this art. First, the role and meaning of belief as evocative of emotional response. Second, the distinctive, if restricted, contribution of literary art to moral awareness.

II

One can move into a consideration of the notion of lived experience as the primary illusion of literary art by a glance at the recently much discussed question about our affective response to literature: how can we be moved by the fate of fictional characters who never existed and by the narration of events which never occurred?

That we sometimes are so moved is taken as given, and this, surely, is sensible enough considering that we are all implicated in this emotional situation since childhood. What is more open to doubt is whether such a state of affairs constitutes a problem and, if so, what it is. Why not simply say: man is an imaginative creature and derives pleasure from the free exercise of the imagination? Are we so puritanical that the free exercise of the imagination, unconstrained by pragmatic purpose, seems a frivolity? Are we so victimized by epistemological anxiety that we consider it dangerously irrational?

The problem has been construed as a problem about belief, on the assumption that affective response presupposes belief of some sort; yet at the same time such belief is associated with non-belief, in that we do not take the fictive presentation to be a factual report. One well-known suggestion for dealing with this is to posit make-believe as the relevant epistemic attitude.² This associates literature with a convention of conscious pretending, a sort of game entered into by writer and reader. I think there might be no serious objection to this if all literature could be considered as one or other form of entertainment literature. By entertainment literature I mean very much what Collingwood meant by 'amusement art'.³ This is art that is sealed off from any relation to life because any emotion evoked by such art is grounded in the sense that lightning can be grounded.

The prime characteristic of entertainment literature is that once read it is used up. However absorbing the reading may be (as with the cleverly constructed detective story, or the fast paced adventure story) it exercises no lasting influence; the episode of encounter with the text is sealed off and leaves not a trace behind. This could be expressed otherwise by saying that such literature, whatever its capacity to capture and hold attention, is in fact highly distanced. Though there is no reason to be unduly censorious

about any form of harmless entertainment, the conventions of make-believe seem remote from our experience with what we consider to be impressive works of literary art.

A more promising suggestion is that, instead of seeking some mid position between belief and non-belief, such as make-believe, we recognize that our non-belief and our belief operate at different levels. Our non-belief in the actuality of the characters and events of the literary presentation does not need to be suspended but, on the contrary, retained, since it is not despite our non-belief but, in part, because of it that we can respond as we do, that is, without existential commitment. Our belief operates on another level; it is concerned with 'what goes on in the work of literature'.⁴

This carries us some distance but not, I think, all the way. The expression 'what goes on in the work of literature' needs to be spelled out. It might refer to straightforward matters that could be stated in synopsis or description, but, in this case, what we believe might amount to something so superficial as scarcely to suggest, much less warrant, affective response. On the other hand, the discernment of what goes on in the work of literature could involve sensitive critical discernment. However, since this approach to a work of literature cannot be separated from evaluative impressions, we might have a response of unbelief as well as of belief. Adverse critical response, if articulated, might be something like: I recognize that in the world of the work such and such characters are supposed to be admirable, such and such episodes deeply and revealingly symbolic, etc., etc., but I don't believe a word of it. This sort of remark, whether justified with reference to any particular work or not, is intelligible.

Evidently we can have the believable and the unbelievable in the sense of the convincing and the unconvincing. Verisimilitude, so understood, has little to do with commonplace assumptions about the way of the world or about how people might be expected to behave, and everything to do with the writer's power of imaginative enstatement, in short, the creation of the illusion of lived experience.

A work of literature, or part thereof, can be unbelievable because it is anaemic and lacks animation. It simply does not live and it cannot be saved by the inclusion of any amount of trivial truth. Trivial truth cannot redeem banality. Another possibility is that the work is false in the sense of fake or bogus, in other words, it is pretentious and lacks authenticity. Certainly such judgements can be contentious, but it is to be noted that were such judgements not intelligible, they could not be disputed.

The power of imaginative enstatement is a matter of creation and evocation which are closely related activities in that the artist's first audience is himself and he must count on surprising himself. There is, of course, no formula for success; literary creation seems to be an enterprise of total

commitment in the hope of the visitation of irresistible grace. The task of the reader is receptivity and understanding, again two closely related activities in that it is through receptivity that understanding is achieved. Whatever may be needed in the way of prior preparation for receptivity the understanding of this, valuable, even indispensable as it may be, is not identical with the understanding of the work of literature. This latter is a matter of experiencing the experiences embodied in the text. Thus it is an awareness of awareness. This duality is characteristic of the art.⁵

The influence of what we take to be impressive works of literature is not easily evaded. This is because we experience them as powerful presences that have designs upon us and that compel participation; while under the influence of any such presence we cannot escape the role of secret sharer in the world of the work. The fact that this sharing involves non-intervention and therefore makes no difference to the work of literature does not mean that it makes no difference to us as readers. What we assent to or accept because we understand it on the basis of an imaginative realization is more than can be neatly packaged in propositional form. This is because there is a difference between knowing about, however minutely, and imaginatively living through. If you have been with Lear on the heath and a secret sharer of his tormented rage you cannot doubt the authenticity of that episode.

However, it may be thought that truth as authenticity lacks credentials for recognition in any philosophically respectable epistemic sense. The received opinion, of course, is that truth is a characteristic of propositions or, if you prefer, statements. Certainly, a work of literature, being verbal, abounds in statements but literature, like art generally, operates more as presentation than as assertion or claim. Yet the desire of a theorist to find something that the literary presentation can be true to or true about, in a manner analogous to statement, may lead to the positing of possible worlds.⁶ The world of the work can then correspond to some possible world, or part thereof. But do we really need this modal realism?

Since, on the basis of this view, the only thing we can be sure of excluding is the logically impossible, and since the strictly logically impossible is not very prevalent in literary art, any work of literature, no matter how mediocre, if innocent of married bachelors, or squared circles, or other logical improprieties, can always achieve truth by correspondence to some possible world. But a belief capable of generating an emotional response in a reader will have to be a belief in something more full-blooded than a mere thin logical possibility. This difficulty is not met by the added proviso that 'the details of the fiction will need to be of the kind that would move one if they were actual'.⁷ If all this means is that the state of affairs exhibited in the literary presentation must be recognized, in a purely intellectual way, as a kind of state of affairs that might be, or even

that customarily is, moving in life experience, then this is acceptable. After all, ordinary intelligibility is a precondition for literary understanding. However, literary understanding as realization can be something different from ordinary intelligibility as mere recognition. To deny this is to deny that literary art can ever be revelatory, that the language and particular style of the presentation makes no difference. The work of literature that is banal may, nevertheless, be well furnished with stereotyped clues as to what is supposed to be moving according to common experience or opinion. But mere reference will not do the work of creative imagination.

III

The second topic to be considered in this paper is that of the role of the primary illusion of literary art in reference to the relationship between literature and morality.

Didactic literature has indubitable moral import but didactic literature seems to labour under a handicap. To be the vehicle of a moral message or generalization is an alien burden for literary art however much it may, on occasion, be carried off by means of high rhetoric or aphoristic elegance. The eloquence of oratorical advocacy is, of course, a perfectly acceptable enterprise and it can be called 'an art' in the particular sense of a skill that requires talent but, since the same may be said of horse training or of medical diagnosis, it is necessary to distinguish 'an art' from 'an art form' which involves imaginative creation. Also, since effective moral advocacy seems to require a certain unambiguous directness and simplicity of outlook, it seems to be something better avoided by the creative artist.

However, this is not the whole story; many, perhaps most, lovers of literature cling to the view that impressive literary art has a moral dimension and that the impressiveness of such art depends, in part, on this circumstance.

There are, as is generally realized, two ways of considering the enterprise of moral philosophy depending on whether what is emphasized is moral principle or moral virtue, the morally right or the morally good. Since it is repugnant to suppose that the right can be the enemy of the good, or the other way around, there would seem to be only two devices for reconciliation: subordination of one to the other or differentiation and relative autonomy of each. Election of the latter is evoked by a lively sense of an ultimate difference that precludes reduction.

Perhaps the shortest way to bring out the difference between discourse on principles, associated with judgements of moral obligation, and discourse on virtues associated with judgements of moral approbation, is to consider the difference in point of view concerning persons. A moral principle by its very nature is general; if it loses its claim to generality it loses its status as a principle. Accordingly, in discourse on principles per-

sons will be considered either as agents of action or as objects of action. In the former case they are considered strictly in their role as moral agents; in the latter, just as persons. In neither case are they considered as individual *personalities*. But if we ask: in what context, under what circumstances, do we take an interest in virtues and vices, in moral character? the answer is: when we consider persons as individual personalities.

We take a lively interest in the moral personality of friends, lovers, colleagues, neighbours. We have a concern for attributes of persons who we suppose may exercise extensive influence, such as presidents, prime ministers, or popes. But the issue of influence is not the only consideration; we take an interest in the moral attributes of historical characters long since dead, and in fictional characters who never existed. Virtues and vices are personality traits and our primary understanding of such traits is through their exemplification in individuals.

The distinction which I am intent on emphasizing between principles and virtues might be challenged on the ground that discourse on moral principles, since it involves the notion of obligation or duty, necessitates the recognition of one moral virtue, the virtue of moral conscientiousness. Indeed, sometimes an ethic or principle is complained of as defective because it recognizes only one moral virtue while virtues, it is obvious, are many. This is a matter that calls for careful consideration.

Is moral conscientiousness a moral virtue, meaning by this one among others? We must reply: from one point of view it is, but from another it is not. What makes it natural to suppose that conscientiousness is a moral virtue is that we can describe a person as morally conscientious, just as we can describe him as courageous or compassionate. But in order to understand what is meant in this context it is necessary to stress the difference between the restricted notion of contractual obligation and the general notion of moral obligation.

Contractual obligations are derived from particular commitments we have made: in electing to marry, in contracting a loan, in assuming the responsibilities of some office. When describing a person as morally conscientious we usually mean that he is loyal or faithful in the fulfilment of his contractual obligations. Moral conscientiousness in this sense can be considered a moral virtue. Though commonly regarded as a desirable trait, for surely the attribution is a commendation, we are not surprised if the tone of voice in which it is commended suggests that it does not have any very exalted status as a virtue. It does not shine luminously like the virtue of spontaneous benevolence, it does not have the dramatic appeal of the virtue of courage.⁸

The notion of obligation derived from the recognition of moral principle is a different matter, for then what is primary is principle. The whole vitality of a sense of obligation derives from the prior recognition of the

moral authority of moral principle. Seen in this context, a sense of duty is not *a* moral virtue; it is the very essence of morality.

An ethic of principle is governed by an ideal: the ideal of securing authority, autonomy, and consensus. In so far as we entertain the hope of a common moral foundation, trans-national and trans-cultural, for a world society, the only promising quest must be for the development of an ethic of principle. But however sound this conclusion may be, it cannot alter the fundamental nature of literary art which will not successfully serve as an advocate for general principles however lofty.

When literature is persuasive it is persuasive through presentation and not through argumentation. To be sure, literature can accommodate argument provided it issues in the voice of a particular speaker and out of a concrete situation. But argument so embedded is deprived of its natural strength, any force it may have is deflected. This is evident at once when generalized pronouncements occurring in literature are taken out of context and subjected to the violence of sharp questioning. Yet for the presentation of individual personality in all its mixture of good and evil and for the exemplification of moral situations in all their complexity, nothing can match the resources of literary art.

We can say with some confidence that wide acquaintance with impressive works of literature can, in extending the range of our imaginative experience, extend the range of our humanistic sympathy, but a crucial matter must be kept in mind. What we call 'the world of the work' will have its valuational emphasis and this is likely to differ if not from work to work then from writer to writer. Since the persuasive power of literary art owes nothing to argument and nothing to evidence but everything to evocation, the artist will express his valuational emphasis by creating a world in which his chosen values are celebrated. In this respect all art is thoroughly biased. Jane Austen as much as Dostoevsky, Homer as much as Milton. This means, of course, that there can be no direct application of literary understanding to moral decision in actual life situations. Acquaintance with literature may act as an antidote against overly simple views and hasty unconsidered assumptions, but responsibility for moral decision remains, as it should, with the individual moral agent.

However, the question might be raised: is it not naïve to suppose that the problem raised by the bias of special celebration amounts to no more than incompatibility of certain positive values? What about evil? What about the literary artist in the role of the mephistophelean spirit that negates? In reply, I venture the suggestion that if we interpret 'negation' to be the coldly cynical, then we can recognize that the cynical, along with the banal and the bogus, is an aesthetic disaster. Savage indignation can easily find literary accommodation but the coldly cynical drains the life-blood out of any literary presentation. The reason for this is not far to seek.

Literary art is first, last, and always about man; it is thoroughly humanistic. Accordingly, though man can be presented as evil he cannot be presented as negligible, for then literature would be deprived of its vital concern.

IV

From early on the notion of art-illusion has been considered chiefly with reference to visual art. This is understandable since space illusion plays so obvious a role in pictorial, sculptural, and architectural art. From the recognition of the obvious there is passage to the discernment of more subtle illusory effects in these arts. By contrast, literary art-illusion has been relatively neglected.

Because literature is verbal it seems to be discourse and discourse seems to be discourse about something. This leads on to questions concerning knowledge, belief, truth. Certainly we can say that a work of literature is an imaginative creation and not a factual explanation or report. This will be readily conceded, but it is this concession that breeds puzzlements. Why, if it is just a pure fabrication, does it have the power to move us? Why, if different works of literary art speak to us in such a variety of voices, celebrate such different values, emphasize such different perspectives on the human situation, does it impress us as revelatory?

The answer to both these questions is that, since the primary illusion of literary art is the illusion of lived experience and we are moved and we feel enlightened because we understand and we understand because we imaginatively live through. Literature, because of its variety, will complicate rather than simplify the moral life, but the liberty and felicity of mankind is more often menaced by the tyranny of simple views.

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THE AESTHETIC THEORY OF STEPHEN DEDALUS

Diané Collinson

IN JAMES JOYCE'S *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*¹ there is a conversation in which Stephen Dedalus expounds a theory of art and beauty to his fellow-student, Lynch. A special value of the whole discussion is its aptness to engage, or re-engage, us in the sorts of issues that have started many along the path of philosophical aesthetics. It does this so well, and with such intensity and freshness, that to reflect inquiringly on its various themes is a rewarding occupation.

Stephen Dedalus does not expound his theory in an orderly way. He delivers it peripatetically as he and Lynch, gesturing, smoking, pausing, contending with the noise and bluster of city traffic, stroll between the College Hall and the Royal Irish Academy in Dublin. The theory has erupted from personal experience of a lyrical and transporting kind. It has found some sort of containment within the ideas of Aristotle and Aquinas, and a few days before the walk with Lynch Stephen has declared to his dean of studies that he will work with those ideas until his own are better formulated. He says:

I need them only for my own use and guidance until I have done something for myself by their light. If the lamp smokes or smells I shall try to trim it. If it does not give light enough I shall sell it and buy another.²

As the two students leave the college hall, Stephen begins by observing that Aristotle has not defined pity and terror. He—Stephen—has defined them, however, and in this way:

Pity is the feeling which arrests the mind in the presence of whatsoever is grave and constant in human sufferings and unites it with the human sufferer. Terror is the feeling which arrests the mind in the presence of whatsoever is grave and constant in human sufferings and unites it with the secret cause.³

The mention of pity and terror takes us straight to Aristotle's discussion of tragedy in *The Art of Poetry* where he names pity and terror (sometimes translated as 'fear') as essential elements of tragedy:

Tragedy . . . is a representation of an action that is worth serious attention, complete in itself, and of some amplitude . . . by means of pity and fear bringing about the purgation of such emotions . . . Tragedy is a representation, not of man, but of action and life, of happiness and unhappiness. . . .⁴

When he analyses tragic action in a later chapter, Aristotle suggests that pity is awakened by undeserved misfortune and our fear, or terror, by the undeserved misfortune of someone just like ourselves. And the sort of person—'someone just like ourselves'—who figures in a tragedy is a person who is 'not conspicuous for virtue and justice, and whose fall into misery is not due to vice and depravity, but rather to some error . . .'.⁵ The terror and pity of tragedy are engendered by the situation, the action, the plot; not by particular or unusual characters, and certainly not by gimmickry or mere spectacle in the production. Aristotle says:

. . . the plot should be so ordered that even without seeing it performed anyone merely hearing what is afoot will shudder with fear and pity. . . . Those who employ spectacle to produce an effect, not of fear but of something merely monstrous, have nothing to do with tragedy, for not every kind of pleasure should be demanded of tragedy, but only that which is proper to it. . . .⁶

Stephen recounts his own example of the type of incident *not* to be counted as tragic:

A girl got into a hansom a few days ago, . . . in London. She was on her way to meet her mother whom she had not seen for many years. At the corner of a street the shaft of a lorry shivered the window of the hansom in the shape of a star. A long fine needle of the shivered glass pierced her heart. She died on the instant. The reporter called it a tragic death. It is not. It is remote from terror and pity according to the terms of my definitions.⁷

Stephen's refusal to describe that death as tragic has Aristotelian grounds. For him, as for Aristotle, accident and chance, the 'merely monstrous' or the freakish, do not in themselves generate tragedy. Tragic action requires coherence, wholeness, and an inevitability that derives from deep and unchanging human characteristics. It presents us with sequences of a sort deemed by Aristotle to be 'worth serious attention', described by Stephen as belonging with 'whatsoever is grave and constant in human suffering'. Accidental and chance occurrences, however terrible or shocking, have no place in tragedy unless they are part of its closely woven pattern of probability and necessity. Thus Aristotle points out that

. . . chance occurrences seem most remarkable when they have the appearance of having been brought about by design—when, for example, the statue of Mity's at Argos killed the man who had caused Mity's death by falling down on him at a public entertainment. Things like this do not seem mere chance occurrences.⁸

I think it would be possible to develop the story of the hansom cab death into a tragedy by placing it in a context that gave it more significance, more layers of connected meanings and interactions, so that we had at last the wholeness, the gravity, and the import required for tragedy by

Aristotle. We might, for instance, show the conjunction of *that* handsome and *that* lorry at *that* time as the culmination or meeting point of significant threads of the action.

It is important to both Aristotle and Stephen that good art, and our experience of it, have nothing to do with sensationalism. In the remark already quoted Aristotle says that 'not every kind of pleasure should be demanded of tragedy, but only that which is proper to it.' The pleasure that is proper to tragedy and that is a proper aesthetic pleasure does not consist in a baleful or salacious dwelling on the bizarre or the sensationally disastrous. Hence the careful circumscription of the appearance of chance events in tragedy. We shall see, as we proceed, how the properties of tragedy generate truly aesthetic experience.

For the present, let us return to Stephen's 'definitions', comparing them with Aristotle's remarks about tragedy. Stephen's definitions tell us what pity and terror do: they arrest the mind, pity uniting us with the sufferer, terror uniting us with the secret cause. Aristotle, true to his avowed methods, offers us causes of pity and terror: pity is awakened by undeserved suffering, terror by the plight of the person just like ourselves. We can try testing these claims on something that is unequivocally a tragedy, on *Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*, for instance. It does seem to be correct to say that pity unites us to Hamlet. Moreover, it is through the kinds of causes designated by Aristotle that the uniting is brought about, for Hamlet's misfortune and his rack of indecision are undeserved and it is this undeservedness that invokes our pity.

Stephen also says that terror unites us to the secret cause. In *Hamlet* the secret cause of tragedy is the vilely motivated murder of a brother, with all its dark consequences. The terror that unites us to all this is terror once again for Aristotle's reasons: terror because this trap of corruption is sprung for a person like ourselves; for Hamlet, although a prince, is quite ordinarily human in his indecision and in his feelings of outrage. He is someone whose fall into misery, to use Aristotle's words, is not due to his vice and depravity, but to error and ignorance.

But perhaps the most philosophically important word in Stephen's definitions is *arrests*. He has said: 'Pity is the feeling which arrests the mind . . .'; 'Terror is the feeling which arrests the mind . . .'. He tells Lynch that the arresting of the mind is the essential mark of the aesthetic moment, the characteristic stance of genuine appreciation. We are back with the idea of proper aesthetic pleasure:

The tragic emotion, in fact, is a face looking two ways, towards terror and towards pity, both of which are phases of it. You see I use the word *arrest*. I mean that the tragic emotion is static. Or rather the dramatic emotion is. The feelings excited by improper art are kinetic, desire or loathing. Desire urges us to possess, to go to

something; loathing urges us to abandon, to go from something. The arts which excite them, pornographical or didactic, are therefore improper arts. The aesthetic emotion (I use the general term) is therefore static. The mind is arrested and raised above desire and loathing.⁹

Stephen is surely right about the aesthetic stance. I neither flee from nor intervene in the action of a drama, but stay still to behold it. I stand to gaze when I reach the window on the stairs from where the shining river can be seen. I am held entranced by a painting or by a lyric poem. But Lynch is inclined not to agree with Stephen on this point, and he tries to argue against it.

You say that art must not excite desire . . . I told you that one day I wrote my name in pencil on the backside of the Venus of Praxiteles in the Museum. Was that not desire?¹⁰

Stephen says that he is speaking of normal natures. Then he says:

But we are just now in a mental world. . . . The desire and loathing excited by improper aesthetic means are really not aesthetic emotions not only because they are kinetic in character but also because they are not more than physical. Our flesh shrinks from what it dreads and responds to the stimulus of what it desires by a purely reflex action of the nervous system. Our eyelid closes before we are aware that the fly is about to enter our eye. . . . In the same way . . . your flesh responded to the stimulus of a naked statue, but it was, I say, simply a reflex action of the nerves. Beauty expressed by the artist cannot awaken in us an emotion which is kinetic or a sensation which is purely physical. It awakens, or ought to awaken, or induces, or ought to induce, an aesthetic stasis, an ideal pity or an ideal terror, a stasis called forth, prolonged and at last dissolved by what I call the rhythm of beauty.¹¹

Well, now it is all tumbling out. First, the aesthetic moment is one that is still, arrested. Second, beauty and art, properly apprehended, ultimately work upon the mind, not merely upon the body. And third, within the mental stasis produced by beauty should be contained an *ideal* pity and an *ideal* terror, 'called forth, prolonged and at last dissolved' by the rhythm of beauty.

What are we to say of ideal pity and ideal terror? First of all, the pity and terror presented are ideal in that they are imaginatively conceived ideas rather than actual emotions; they are not part of the spectators' or the actors' first-order life circumstances. They are ideal also in that they are quintessential. Because of this there is a sense—Platonic—in which they can be construed as more purely real than in a first-order life situation. We can contemplate ideal pity because it is pity *for pity's sake*. No other attitude is logically appropriate to ideal pity. In such a contemplation there can be no incitement to action; the activity is that of beholding, and thereby participating imaginatively. Whatever is experienced is experienced for the sake of what it is, and not in order to change it.

In that close-packed speech of Stephen's, ideal pity and ideal terror are described as being at last dissolved by 'the rhythm of beauty'. The conditions laid down by Aristotle under which pity and terror are to be presented in tragedy are very like those required by Stephen to produce 'the rhythm of beauty'. The strongest link from Stephen's dissolving of pity and terror to Aristotle's ideas shows up clearly if we look again at that famous passage, already quoted, from *The Art of Poetry*:

Tragedy . . . is a representation of an action that is worth serious attention, complete in itself and of some amplitude . . . by means of pity and fear *bringing about the purgation of such emotions*. . . .

For Aristotle, something that invites a non-aesthetic regard is not properly tragic just as, for Stephen, something that incites desire or aversion is improper art. To present the pitiful and the fearful in a way that invites aesthetic contemplation is to release us from their power to move us to desire, aversion, and base voyeurism; and in being thus released we are purged of pity and fear as activating emotions; we are able to experience them for the sake of knowing what they are like. They yield their proper pleasures.

Aristotle describes the 'proper pleasures' of tragedy in very plain terms. He points out that inborn in all of us is the instinct to enjoy imitation and accurate representation. We enjoy seeing likenesses because in doing so we acquire information and, Aristotle says, ' . . . learning is a very great pleasure, not for philosophers only, but for other people as well, however limited their capacity for it may be'¹² (*sic*). Thus, through aesthetic contemplation of a finely depicted, pitiable and terrifying tragedy we can enjoy apt representation and acquire what Aristotle calls 'new information'. The experience of art is cognitive experience of a special kind. The work of art does, as common parlance has it, 'take us out of ourselves'. It transports us. Then we see clearly, because self does not stand in the way.

Throughout *The Art of Poetry* Aristotle reminds us that tragedy, if it is to impart its proper pleasures and so purge pity and fear, must develop and grow from its given constituents. The unravelling of the plot, he says, 'should arise from the circumstances of the plot itself. . . . there should be nothing inexplicable about what happens.'¹³ The tragedy is like an organism: ' . . . its various incidents must be so arranged that if any one of them is differently placed or taken away the effect of wholeness will be seriously disrupted.'¹⁴ Stephen, in speaking of the dissolving of pity and terror within the stasis of contemplation, does not give detail comparable with Aristotle's, but he is speaking along similar lines when he says:

Rhythm . . . is the first formal aesthetic relation of part to part in any aesthetic whole or of an aesthetic whole to its part or parts or of any part to the aesthetic whole of which it is a part.¹⁵

It must be that a work that is whole, that is rhythmically self-contained, is able by its completeness and self-relatedness both to resist the spectator's *personal* intrusion and yet—and because of that resistance—engage him totally.

But Lynch, on the walk to the Irish Academy, allows no pause to explore the topic. He says: 'If that is rhythm, . . . let me hear what you call beauty.' And Stephen replies: 'Aquinas says that is beautiful the apprehension of which pleases.' And Lynch remembers the Latin: 'Pulcra sunt quae visa placent.'¹⁶

Stephen points out that Aquinas uses the word 'visa' to cover aesthetic apprehension of all kinds, whether through sight or hearing or through any other mode of its perception. He says:

This word, though it is vague, is clear enough to keep away good and evil, which excite desire and loathing. It means certainly a stasis and not a kinesis.¹⁷

We are back again with another aspect of the idea of poised apprehending, the contemplative gaze, as characteristic of the aesthetic moment. It distinguishes the beautiful from the moral: beauty is for pleased beholding and is distinct from the moral which invites movement towards or away from its objects. Stephen has certainly got his Aquinas right here. In Part I of the *Summa Theologica* Aquinas says that beauty and goodness in a thing are identical fundamentally but that they differ *logically*, 'for goodness', he says 'properly relates to the appetite (goodness being what all things *desire*); and therefore it has the aspect of an end (the appetite being a kind of movement towards a thing). On the other hand, beauty relates to the cognitive faculty; for beautiful things are those which please when seen.'¹⁸

Stephen is eager to explore this distinction further, comparing our delight in beauty with our delight in truth, 'You would not', he says to Lynch, 'write your name in pencil across the hypotenuse of a right-angled triangle'. But Lynch is skimming forward on the surface of his friend's thought and is impatient for more ideas. He says: 'But what is beauty? . . . Out with another definition. Something we see and like! Is that the best that you and Aquinas can do?'¹⁹ Stephen makes another attempt. 'Let us take woman', he says, and Lynch replies, 'Let us take her'. Stephen continues:

The Greek, the Turk, the Chinese, the Copt, the Hottentot, . . . all admire a different type of female beauty. That seems to be a maze out of which we cannot escape. I see,

however, two ways out. One is this hypothesis: that every physical quality admired by men in women is in direct connection with the manifold functions of women for the propagation of the species. It may be so. The world, it seems, is drearier than even you, Lynch, imagined. For my part I dislike that way out. It leads to eugenics rather than to aesthetic. It leads you out of the maze into a new gaudy lectureroom where MacCann, with one hand on *The Origin of Species* and the other hand on The New Testament, tells you that you admired the great flanks of Venus because you felt that she would bear you burly offspring and admired her great breasts because you felt that she would give good milk to her children and yours.²⁰

Lynch says that MacCann is a sulphur yellow liar, and Stephen says there remains another way out. It is:

This hypothesis . . . though the same object may not seem beautiful to all people, all people who admire a beautiful object find in it certain relations which satisfy and coincide with the stages themselves of all aesthetic apprehension. These relations of the sensible, visible to you through one form and to me through another, must be therefore the necessary qualities of beauty.²¹

Stephen has now expounded a formalist theory of beauty. But first he has presented the problem of saying what beauty is. How is it that many different types of woman may all be judged beautiful? The new evolutionists would answer by assimilating delight in the beautiful to the biological urge to survive: the delight is nothing but a manifestation of a blind will to perpetuity, and so the common factor in all its manifestations is the procreative instinct. But Stephen has a different analysis and another solution to the problem. Aesthetic pleasure is not to be assimilated to physical or psychological propensities. In each and every beautiful woman and in each and every beautiful thing it is certain formal relations that delight us; and it is the mind that is pleased in their apprehension.

These relations are presumably those which produce that 'first formal relation' named by Stephen 'the rhythm of beauty': one dwells in aesthetic entrancement by apprehending the formal relations which are the necessary qualities of the beheld beauty.

Stephen's exposition goes unchallenged because a sudden din of traffic in Lower Mount Street threatens to engulf all the fine talk. A long dray, laden with iron, clatters so loudly round the corner of Sir Patrick Dunn's Hospital that his words are lost. Lynch oaths furiously but moments later is singing a Latin hymn, for Stephen reminds him that the scholastics who wrote about beauty also created it. In Lower Mount Street they meet Donovan, a fellow-student so obsessed with exam results and academic small talk that he is blind to the conversational insults heaped on him by Lynch and Stephen. But leaving Donovan at last, the two move on towards Merrion Square and resume their talk. Stephen wants to finish what he was saying about beauty. He goes on:

. . . the most satisfying relations of the sensible must therefore correspond to the necessary phases of artistic apprehension. Find these and you find the qualities of universal beauty. Aquinas says: *Ad pulcritudinem tria requiruntur integritas, consonantia, claritas*. I translate it so: *Three things are needed for beauty, wholeness, harmony and radiance*. Do these correspond to the phases of apprehension? Are you following?²²

Lynch says he is. Let us make sure that we are also. Stephen has named Aquinas's three requirements for beauty—wholeness, harmony, and radiance. And these requirements, he suggests, correspond to our mode of apprehending the beautiful. He now takes Lynch step by step through this mode of apprehension. He asks him to look at a basket which a butcher's boy has slung inverted over his head, and he says:

In order to see that basket, . . . your mind first of all separates the basket from the rest of the visible universe which is not the basket. The first phase of apprehension is a bounding line drawn about the object to be apprehended. An aesthetic image is presented to us either in space or in time. What is audible is presented in time, what is visible is presented in space. But temporal or spatial, the aesthetic image is first luminously apprehended as selfbounded and selfcontained upon the immeasurable background of space or time which is not it. You apprehend it as *one* thing. You see it as one whole. You apprehend its wholeness. That is *integritas*.

He continues:

Then . . . you pass from point to point, led by its formal lines; you apprehend it as balanced part against part within its limits; you feel the rhythm of its structure. In other words, the synthesis of immediate perception is followed by the analysis of apprehension. Having first felt that it is *one* thing you feel now that it is a *thing*. You apprehend it as complex, multiple, divisible, separable, made up of its parts, the result of its parts and their sum, harmonious. That is *consonantia*.

Integritas and *consonantia* are not too difficult to understand: that which is beautiful is one whole thing and it is a harmonious thing. But now we come to *claritas*, which is far more elusive. Stephen translates '*claritas*' as 'radiance'. He says:

The connotation of the word . . . is rather vague. Aquinas uses a term which seems to be inexact. It baffled me for a long time. It would lead you to believe that he had in mind symbolism or idealism, the supreme quality of beauty being a light from some other world, the idea of which the matter was but the shadow, the reality of which it was but the symbol. I thought he might mean that *claritas* was the artistic discovery and representation of the divine purpose in anything or a force of generalization which would make the aesthetic image a universal one, make it outshine its proper conditions. But that is literary talk. I understand it so.²³

Yes, it is literary talk, if by 'literary talk' in this context Stephen means talk that sounds well but which is not well or deeply grounded in what

Wittgenstein would call the grammar of its concepts; talk that is not necessarily sensitive to the logical placing and status of the concepts it uses. To suppose that the beautiful is a means to some further glory is to make a logical, and for Stephen a theological, mistake; rather, it is that something beautiful is itself a glory. Its radiance is not bestowed upon it; it is itself radiant.

If we look at the part of the *Summa Theologica* that contains the remarks on beauty that Stephen is quoting, we find that Aquinas is discussing the attributes of Divine Persons, and the question whether the attributes are correctly ascribed. He considers the Holy Trinity. To the Father is appropriated Eternity and to the Holy Ghost use; but it is appropriations to the Son that interest us here. To the Son is appropriated species, or beauty, with its three conditions: *integritas*, *consonantia* and *claritas*. Species or Beauty, he says, is the principle of existence; it is the way in which something which is perfectly what it is is *there*. Of the three conditions of beauty he says the following: *integritas*, or wholeness, is to be compared with the way in which the Son has truly and perfectly the nature of the Father; *consonantia*, or harmony, agrees with the Son's property of being the Image of the Father in that it is entirely proportionate and harmonious with the Father; *claritas*, or radiance, agrees with the property of the Son as the Word, 'the light and splendour of the intellect'. And Aquinas quotes Augustine who speaks of the Son as 'the *art* of the Omnipotent God'.²⁴

A little later, in the same part of the *Summa*, Aquinas specifically says that the Son is not an instrument but the principle from a principle; the Son is equal with and distinguishable from the Father. That which is beautiful is accordingly not to be construed as having the status of means or instrument; it is not beautiful in virtue of its source, but is equal with and distinct from its source. It does seem to be this status of completely justified separateness of being, attributed by Aquinas to the Beauty that is the Image and Nature of God, that Stephen is claiming for anything that is beautiful.

He continues to speak of *claritas*:

When you have apprehended that basket as one thing and have then analysed it according to its form and apprehended it as a thing you make the only synthesis which is logically and aesthetically permissible. You see that it is that thing which it is and no other thing. The radiance of which he [Aquinas] speaks is the scholastic *quidditas*, the *whatness* of a thing. This supreme quality is felt by the artist when the aesthetic image is first conceived in his imagination. The mind in that mysterious instant Shelley likened beautifully to a fading coal. The instant wherein that supreme quality of beauty, the clear radiance of the aesthetic image, is apprehended luminously by the mind which has been arrested by its wholeness and fascinated by its harmony is the luminous silent stasis of aesthetic pleasure, a spiritual state very like to that cardiac condition which the Italian physiologist Luigi Galvani, using a phrase almost as beautiful as Shelley's, called the enchantment of the heart.²⁵

Stephen has now linked *claritas*, the third and supreme condition of beauty, to the third stage of aesthetic apprehension. That third stage of apprehension is not too difficult to recognize and to describe. In *Stephen Hero*, the novel from which the *Portrait* is developed, Stephen likens the moment to an epiphany: a first showing forth of beauty which comes as a revelation, analogous to the first showing of the Son of God to the wise men. But for a better understanding of the *quidditas* that is itself a radiance, and which Stephen has further described as the 'whatness' of a thing, we have to turn again to the writings of Aquinas, and first to some words not mentioned by Stephen but which in fact constitute the closing remarks of the *claritas* passage. Those remarks may help us to understand at any rate what Aquinas himself meant by *claritas*.

... beauty includes three conditions, integrity, or perfection, since those things which are impaired are by the very fact ugly; due proportion or harmony; and lastly, brightness or clarity, *whence things are called beautiful which have a bright colour*²⁶ (my italics).

That allusion to colour—'whence things are called beautiful which have a bright colour'—is quite startling. It sounds so simple that one suspects it must be particularly difficult or profound. I believe it is in fact straightforward and that it is helpful to consider it carefully.

We must first ask how colour can give clarity, or radiance, to something. The colour of something certainly can arrest the mind, making one dwell on the object and see it clearly. It can give *présence* to something, in that it can make it stand out and become fully individuated. But these are contingent matters. What is more important is to know that Aquinas followed Aristotle in holding that colours which are near to white expand vision. And he distinguished colours not by what they actually were in themselves, but by what they *did* to expand or contract vision. Given this account of colour, a bright, light colour would certainly be thought to facilitate the clarity of something and, correspondingly, the seeing of it. It's worth noting also that colour is a property of matter but that, for Aquinas, the nearer a colour approaches to white the more it takes on the nature of light which was reckoned to be 'without number, weight and measure, not absolutely, but in comparison with corporeal things . . .'²⁷

But Stephen has said that the clarity or radiance of which Aquinas speaks is the scholastic *quidditas*. Aquinas discusses *quidditas* in the treatise *On Being and Essence*. He first tells us that 'essence' is derived from 'being', where 'being' means 'those things that actually do exist'. Then he speaks of *quidditas* itself. He says:

'... philosophers have substituted the name 'quiddity' for that of 'essence'. It is what the Philosopher frequently calls 'the what a thing is to be', that is, that through which

something is a certain kind of being. It is called 'form', moreover, inasmuch as 'form' signifies the certitude of anything. . . . It is also called by the name 'nature' when nature is said of anything that can be grasped intellectually in some way. For a thing is intelligible only through its definition and essence . . .²⁸

So quiddity is the essence, the being, the nature, the definition, the form of something. If Stephen is right in linking *claritas* with quiddity, then the suggestion seems to be that the quiddity or essence of something that is beautiful shines forth from it. But here we are near to metaphor. Stephen cannot mean that the quiddity or form of something beautiful actually gives out light. It can only be that the necessary clarity of the beautiful has the effect of illumination on the beholder. In the object, *claritas* is the fulfilment of apt relations which are perfectly clear because there is nothing in them which is not apt; in the beholder it is a clarity of vision commensurate with the aptness and distinctness of what is seen: *what* the thing is is radiantly clear.

But to the question: *What* is it? there are two—at least—kinds of answer. One is of the form: It is an *X*—a thing of a certain *kind*, a statue, a vase, a man; the other is of the form: It is *this X*—this statue, this vase, this man. It is the second kind of answer that meets our case. In his treatise *The Principles of Nature* Aquinas has his own way of making the point, by distinguishing between substantial forms and accidental forms. He says:

. . . when a substantial form is introduced, something is said to have come into being without qualification . . . For example, a man comes into being, or a man is generated. When, however, an accidental form is introduced, something is said not to have come into being, but to have become *this*.²⁹

And of course, the properties of accidental forms are such things as particular colours, shapes, measurements, textures and so on: *this* colour, *this* shape, *this* texture, *this* curve, make the statue *this* statue. Stephen's way of putting it is to say, 'When you have apprehended that basket as a thing . . . then . . . you see that it is that thing which it is and no other thing.'

If we cannot be certain, as Stephen seems to be as he and Lynch at last approach the Royal Irish Academy, that in speaking of *claritas* Aquinas is referring to *quiddity* or form, we can at least adduce one further consideration to support the idea, a consideration which will show that at the very least it is not contrary to Aquinas's mode of thought to suppose the reference.

We have to think of certain connections as holding between *integritas*, *consonantia* and *claritas*. The wholeness which is *integritas* is that within which and through which *consonantia*, or harmony, can be realized; for only that which is whole can and must sustain a flawless relationship of parts within it, and can and must sustain a flawless relationship of each part

to the whole. Harmony is the form which wholeness must take. But the due proportions of harmony and wholeness are nothing in abstraction: due proportions are proportions due to what the thing is, and just as harmony is the form of wholeness, so is *claritas* the particular form of the relationships, distinctions, and determinations which make the thing what it is and no other thing. In this sense, *claritas* is the essence, the nature, *quidditas*, or whatness of something.

Stephen now has almost had his say. *Claritas* and our experience of it are the heart of his aesthetic theory. In the last few yards of their journey he tells Lynch that he arrived at the theory by writing questions in a book: Is a chair finely made tragic or comic? Is the portrait of the Mona Lisa good if I desire to see it? Is the bust of Sir Philip Crampton lyrical, epical, or dramatic? And so on.

A fine rain begins to fall as they approach the national library and as Stephen, rounding off his exposition, remarks that the artist, as maker of dramatic forms, 'like the God of creation, remains within or behind or beyond or above his handiwork, invisible, refined out of existence, indifferent, paring his fingernails'.³⁰ The remark raises a whole new question about the relationship of an artist to his work; but it is never explored because the rain falls faster, the two students reach their destination, and Stephen finds his beloved sheltering in the entrance to the Academy.

Most of us nowadays would not want to think for long within the categories Stephen Dedalus used to shape his ideas. We find those categories too hard-edged, or too metaphysical, or too formal. But they saved him, and may save us, too, from the merely 'literary talk' we might otherwise fall into. Like Stephen, we may take them for our own use and guidance until we have done something for ourselves by their light.

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HUMOUR AND AESTHETIC ENJOYMENT OF INCONGRUITIES

Mike W. Martin

CLASSICAL PHILOSOPHERS frequently gave serious attention to humour in the course of unfolding a general speculative theory of metaphysics, epistemology, or human nature. Within these contexts analyses of humour often ended up fitting the speculative theory better than they fit the phenomenon. Bergson's view of humour, for example, as 'something mechanical encrusted upon the living' emerged naturally from his metaphysics of vitalism, but his claim for this being the general leitmotiv of the humorous has little plausibility.¹ Much the same can be said concerning the relationship between Hobbes's psychological egoism and his claim that 'the passion of laughter is nothing else but sudden glory arising from a sudden conception of some eminency in ourselves'.²

In my view the most promising of the traditional theories is Schopenhauer's incongruity theory set forth in *The World as Will and Representation*.³ This theory was given a careful reformulation by Michael Clark in 'Humour and Incongruity', a reformulation which freed it from Schopenhauer's particular speculative interests.⁴ Yet Clark's version is far from adequate as it stands, and my first main concern will be to develop an improved version.

Humour has also aroused philosophical interest as a special topic within aesthetics. Here the context made it easy to assume that enjoyment of humour is always a variety of aesthetic appreciation. Thus by the time *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy* appeared, D. H. Monro could begin his entry under 'Humor' by taking it for granted that to find something humorous 'is to have a special kind of aesthetic emotion'.⁵ More recently John Morreall argued that to appreciate humour is to have an aesthetic experience, although not necessarily an emotional one.⁶ My second concern will be to reject this generalization and to replace it with a criterion for when enjoying humour is an aesthetic experience.

I

Throughout I shall follow Clark in using the word 'amusement' in a narrow sense to mean 'amusement at the humorous', and not just any kind of light entertainment or diversion. By contrast, the word 'humour' will be used in a very wide sense to cover anything funny (i.e., 'funny ha-ha')

rather than 'funny peculiar'). This means setting aside the narrow usage in which humour is contrasted with wit (which is more intellectual and relies on verbal ingenuity), sarcasm (which is more derisive), satire (which aims to discredit vices and follies), slapstick (typically based on boisterous action), and farce (generated by one-dimensional characters and improbable situations).

Clark's guiding intuition, which I share, is that humour can be elucidated by clarifying amusement. If no one was ever amused by humour then humour would not exist. For 'the humorous is so characterized in virtue of the human attitude or response to it: we call something "humorous" if it is apt to, or should or deserves to, amuse people, or some special sort of person'.⁷

What, then, is amusement at humour? Clark believes (and here I will later disagree) that it is possible to state necessary and sufficient conditions for amusement. To begin with, amusement is a specific type of emotion which must have a particular type of object. The object is pinpointed by Schopenhauer's incongruity theory. To be amused is to perceive, think, or imagine something incongruous, and this involves applying a concept to something with which it is not fully congruent. Or as Clark paraphrases Schopenhauer, incongruous subsumption under a concept amounts to viewing one or more objects as 'different in some way from the standard instances falling under the concept'.⁸ Hence the object of amusement always involves something viewed as unusual or odd. The incongruity, it should be emphasized, need not actually exist in the objective world. It is the phenomenological, intentional, object of thought that is spoken of as incongruous.

Clark proceeds by arguing that apprehending an incongruity is only a necessary, but not by itself a sufficient, condition. His full set of defining features may be summarized as follows: (1) A person perceives (thinks, imagines) an object as being incongruous. (2) The person enjoys perceiving (thinking, imagining) the object. (3) The person enjoys the perceived (thought, imagined) incongruity at least partly for itself, rather than solely for some ulterior reason.

This account has three major strengths. First, it enables us to keep distinct the conceptual and empirical issues concerning amusement and humour. There are innumerable causes and influences which lead people to experience amusement, and to experience it with varying degrees of intensity. On the subjective side there is the person's particular mood, psychological set, perception of the situation, desires (such as to ridicule), and needs (such as to release tension). On the objective side there is the timing, emphasis, wording, and degree of originality and freshness of a joke. Cultural and social conditioning and even genetic inheritance would presumably have to go into a complete causal explanation of amusement.

Some classical theories of humour are best viewed as partial causal explanations. This is true, for example, of Relief from Restraint Theories which treat enjoyment of humour as an act of emotional and physical release,⁹ and Superiority Theories, like Hobbes's, which treat it as an act of elevating oneself in one's own eyes at the expense of someone else.

Second, Clark's view avoids a simplistic treatment of the relationship between laughter and amusement. Schopenhauer's discussion, for instance, was hamstrung from the outset by equating the question 'What is humour?' with 'What evokes laughter?'. Thus he construed the task of clarifying enjoyment of the humorous as the same as providing an explanation of the origin and meaning of laughter. His thesis was that 'In every case, *laughter* results from nothing but the suddenly perceived incongruity between a concept and the real objects that had been thought through it in some relation; and laughter is just the expression of this incongruity'.¹⁰

There are several obvious objections to this claim. Not all laughter is prompted by humour and perceived incongruity. There is the laughter of joy at one's good fortune; hysterical laughter at a tragedy one cannot bear; and the sadist's chuckle of happiness in response to the suffering of his victim. Sometimes laughter is not *at* anything at all, for it can be a purely physiological response to nitrous oxide or electrical stimulation. Laughter expressing amusement at humour, however, always takes an intentional object. Conversely, much enjoyment of humour is never expressed in laughter, either because an inclination to laugh is suppressed or because the humour is enjoyed without so much as a felt inclination to laugh. Moreover, incongruities such as those involved in human deformities and disasters often produce pain and sadness, rather than laughter.

Third, the incongruity theory has the breadth needed to capture the enormous variety of things we are amused by. It applies to amusement at unusual dress, grooming, and speech. It covers sexual and scatological jokes which make reference to subject-matter thought inappropriate in polite society. It accounts for the humour of the bungling oaf, the victim of the banana peel, the thumb-hammerer, and others who fail to execute effective action. It extends to amusement at Falstaff's departures from his society's ideals. And it captures amusement at puns, where one meaning of an expression deflects from another more suitable or normal sense of a passage. In short, without being thinly vacuous, it allows for the many variations suggested in the OED's entry for 'incongruity': '(i) Disagreement in character or qualities; want of accordance or harmony; discrepancy; inconsistency. (ii) Want of accordance with what is reasonable or fitting; unsuitableness, inappropriateness, absurdity. (iii) Want of harmony of parts or elements; want of self-consistency; incoherence.'

II

In spite of these strengths, however, Clark's account suffers from a serious deficiency. It is vulnerable to a wide variety of counter-examples which show it to be insufficient for distinguishing amusement from other forms of enjoying incongruities for their own sake.

The most compelling cases are non-humorous aesthetic enjoyments. Clark himself seemed to suspect the existence of these cases when he expressed the following doubts at the end of his essay:

Suppose a man is looking at a picture and is enjoying this experience, and suppose he says he likes the picture because of the incongruity of its content. Moreover he likes the incongruity for its own sake, not for any insight, say, that the picture gives him into the nature of the world. Must we say he finds the picture amusing? I find it difficult to say.¹¹

This passage contains a good description of aesthetic enjoyment of an element of discord, contrast, or irony in a picture. Surely, however, the enjoyment of such elements need not constitute amusement at humour.

Grant Wood's *American Gothic*, for example, is a painting of a man and woman on a farm standing in a formal and rigid pose. The woman's hair is combed neatly and firmly pulled back, and yet—ironically and incongruously—there is one prominent wisp of hair curling loosely downward. The irony is enjoyable for its own sake, whether or not it seems funny. (For me, sometimes it does and sometimes it does not.) Again, one need only recall the stunning incongruities permeating Picasso's work, such as in the disjointed, mangled, and tragic—though not humorous—figures in *Guernica*.

Incongruities present in other art forms can be enjoyed in the absence of amusement. Thus the ironies present in the plot of *Oedipus Rex* can be aesthetically enjoyed, although they are anything but funny. With respect to music, there is the delight at non-humorous incongruities experienced by connoisseurs of dissonant and atonal music. We would also understand a description of Oriental music as having an enjoyably 'incongruous beauty'. A character in a John Hersey novel says just that about the songs of a tracker pulling boats up the Yangtze river: 'He sang songs of an incongruous beauty' and 'wove melodies of an incongruous haunting gaiety in and out, in and out'.¹²

Aesthetic appreciation, however, is not the only 'pleasure domain' providing counter-examples. Incongruities in erotic objects can be enjoyed for their own sake in a purely sexual way. Freud described a foot fetishist who became sexually excited upon seeing a certain kind of scraggy and incongruously shaped foot.¹³ If the person sometimes enjoyed this incongruity-directed pleasure for its own sake, whether or not it also led to further

sexual activity, then Clark's conditions would be met. It can be argued, of course, that there are ulterior unconscious reasons for the fetishist's enjoyment. But Clark's Condition 3 would still be met, since it merely requires that the incongruity be enjoyed at least partly for its own sake.

Imagine too a culture of people who lacked a sense of humour, but who stood motionless for long durations staring with pleasure at objects that we would be amused by, or listening for hours to the repetition of jokes that we would find funny. If they did this within a religious context, we might describe their enjoyment as some bizarre kind of religious delight or awe about incongruities; other contexts might lead us to think they found aesthetic satisfaction in the objects; and we would be hard pressed to classify their enjoyment if it derived from a continuous pleasure in their big toes that occurred at the sight of incongruities.

III

Our problem, then, is how to distinguish amusement from these other ways of enjoying incongruities for their own sake. What is it to enjoy incongruities specifically as humorous and for their humour?

I will not attempt to uncover some new necessary condition which when added to Clark's list will yield a set of necessary and sufficient conditions covering all cases. For my intent is to abjure the search for a simple set of necessary and sufficient conditions for amusement and humour. Instead, I propose to clarify amusement by providing the sufficient conditions for only the central cases. Other cases will then qualify as amusement to the extent they bear a family resemblance to these central cases.

Let us reconsider Schopenhauer's emphasis upon laughter—the element which dropped out altogether in Clark's account. While laughter is neither a necessary nor sufficient condition for amusement, as we saw earlier, surely it is not an accident that the word 'laughable' is a very close synonym for 'funny' and 'humorous'. Laughter is the most characteristic way of enjoying humour. Because of this it provides a focus for understanding our concepts of humour and enjoyment of humour.

It is sufficient for amusement, I suggest, that Clark's conditions are met *and* at least one of the following occurs. (a) The person laughs spontaneously at the incongruity. (b) The person has a spontaneous inclination to laugh in response to the perceived incongruity, but suppresses it. (By 'spontaneous' is meant unmediated by a judgement that the incongruity should be laughed at or is suited to be laughed at.) (c) The person laughs or has an inclination to laugh following an explicit judgement that the incongruity is worthy of laughter. (d) The person experiences episodic cheerfulness (without an inclination to laugh) in response to the incon-

gruity and does so because he or she judges the incongruity to be laughable—i.e., worthy of or suited to be laughed at.

With these central cases in mind we might formulate a disjunctive condition and add it to Clark's three conditions: (4) The person responds to the perceived incongruity with laughter, or with an inclination to laugh (whether or not it is preceded by an explicit judgement that the incongruity is worthy to be laughed at), or with an episodic cheerfulness in response to the incongruity as being suited for laughter, or with closely related forms of enjoyment. The open-endedness of (4) should tempt no one to treat it as a strictly necessary condition. It merely sketches several paradigms and indicates that other instances may qualify if they are significantly similar to these central cases.

As thus modified, Schopenhauer's twin emphasis on perceived incongruity and the laughable does succeed in clarifying the concept of amusement, and thereby the concept of humour.

As a kind of intuitive check of this theory, return for a moment to Clark's man looking at a picture whose incongruous content he says he enjoys for its own sake. Imagine he is looking at Picasso's *Weeping Woman*, a picture of a bizarrely disjointed face painted in wildly incongruous colours. Imagine further that he is puzzled about precisely why he enjoys perceiving the incongruities and unsure whether he finds them amusing. Then something clicks, and suddenly he realizes he is amused. What happened?

It seems to me most likely that at this moment he either laughed, felt like laughing, or experienced an episodic cheerfulness because he tacitly or explicitly 'came to view the incongruities as laughable. These would be the central cases. But it is also possible that he experienced a milder sort of enjoyment than actual episodic cheerfulness. Such might be the case when he soberly declares to us that the picture is not really laughable—though it is perhaps worth a smile. His experience might count as amusement even though it is not one of the more central cases we would use to clarify the concept of amusement.

By contrast, the man's eye could focus on the tears and the expression of pain in the mouth. His amusement may turn to sadness. Or more likely it may transform into non-humorous enjoyment of the painting for its interesting way of expressing or capturing grief. The grief, of course, as expressed in the painting may be aesthetically enjoyed without actually causing the man to feel sadness or grief. Likewise, next imagine that the man comes to enjoy the humorous incongruities in the picture as aesthetic properties without actually being amused by them. That is, he enjoys the humour in the painting—enjoys the incongruity as laughable—without actually being amused by it. My guess is that in this case he will not

experience either an inclination to laugh or episodic cheerfulness in direct response to seeing the incongruity as laughable.

Three further comments need to be added. First, if I am correct it is important for laughter to enter into an account of amusement as we know it. But it does, nevertheless, seem to me conceivable that there could be amusement in a world without laughter to serve as a reference point for understanding it. All that would be needed is for some other typical behaviour, sufficiently analogous to laughter, to be present as a new focal point for understanding it.

Second, laughter should not be regarded as an incidental outer behaviour which leaves an experience of inner cheerfulness untouched. To laugh spontaneously is generally to undergo a distinctive form of physical pleasure. Or rather, it is to undergo one of a variety of such forms of pleasure. These include snorts, sniggers, and guffaws; cackles, giggles, and mellow belly laughs; howls, roars, shrieks, paroxysms and convulsions. This is a further reason for not bypassing laughter in an account of amusement by making sole reference to inner cheerfulness.

Third, we have been discussing episodic amusement. There is also a use of 'amusement' which refers to a long-term state. It makes sense to say a person was amused for weeks by a laughably bizarre turn of events.¹⁴ Here the state of enjoyment is not a steady-state of the sort of enjoyment defined above. Instead it involves a belief that the events warrant laughter, and also a disposition to some episodic amusement.

IV

We have seen that many aesthetic enjoyments of incongruities do not involve amusement at something humorous. It is time to ask whether all amusement at the humorous constitutes aesthetic enjoyment or appreciation. I believe the preceding account enables us to respond to this question with more care than is usual, although the discussion will have to be somewhat tentative. A complete answer would presuppose an adequate theory of aesthetic experience, and providing such a theory is no easy task. My procedure will be to begin by criticizing John Morreall's defence of the view that amusement always constitutes aesthetic experience given certain traditional conceptions of aesthetic experience. Following this I will show that on one fairly broad definition of aesthetic satisfaction not all amusement qualifies, although much does.

There are some noteworthy general similarities, several of which Morreall discusses with insight, between the exercise of a sense of humour and what are commonly accepted as aesthetic experiences.

(a) Both amusement and aesthetically enjoyed experiences can occur in response to either works of art or things which are not works of art. Thus,

human behaviour, natural objects, comic plays, and novels are equally capable of serving as objects of aesthetic or humorous enjoyments.

(b) Amusement, like aesthetic enjoyment, can be directed towards intentional objects experienced in various sense-perception modalities and also towards objects of thought. Both come in response to things seen, heard, and (less frequently) to things touched, tasted or smelled. And the experience of either need not be a perceptual one at all, as when the object is an idea or story.

(c) Both generally involve the play of the imagination in getting us to view common objects or situations in novel ways, and in leading us to consider enriching possible worlds.

(d) While there is disagreement over whether aesthetic experiences should be regarded as necessarily enjoyable,¹⁵ a weaker view is that those aesthetic experiences which we prize for their intrinsic worth are enjoyable experiences. Non-enjoyable ones are valued only for some instrumental value or further good effect on our lives. Here there would seem to be a comparison with amusement. We should add that both amusement and aesthetic appreciation may involve an admixture of considerable pain. Among the most intense experiences of art are the anguishing jolts from complacency or moral blindness. Just as honest responses to the work of Dostoevsky or O'Neill typically involve something other than pleasant diversions, so too the humour of Shaw and Kafka can sting.

(e) Not only are amusement and aesthetic appreciation both sources of desirable experiences, but we tend to see it as a deficiency for persons to lack a developed sensitivity either to humour or aesthetic appreciation. The grounds for these value judgements are typically not moral ones, and indeed moral values sometimes come into conflict with them. Occasionally we employ moral terms in appraising both the telling of jokes and the creation or displaying of works of art, such as when they are blatantly racist or sexist. Again, there are times when it would be morally wrong to indulge in aesthetic experiences or amusement. Thus we are appalled by a person who could stand by enjoying the striking colour display created by a bleeding accident victim when he ought to be calling an ambulance, and even more appalled by a person who chose to crack some jokes in place of providing help.¹⁶ There are also instances of both jokes and art dealing with ethnic or sexual themes or human deformities which may leave our reactions confused and ambivalent because of the clash of our moral interests with desires for other sorts of enjoyments or for understanding.

(f) The responses of amusement and aesthetic appreciation are equally matters of taste, and in both the subjective and objective senses of 'taste'. On the one hand, aesthetic experiences involve objective discrimination and perceptiveness of properties like unity, gracefulness, tension—and incongruity. This discrimination is an achievement, unlike the mere ability

to perceive colours, lines, and sounds. The perceptiveness can be cultivated by practice and formal training in studying humour and art.¹⁷ For there are objective reasons which can be referred to in explaining the images of incongruity created in subtle wit, just as a critic can help us identify features of a work of art that we have missed. On the other hand, such reason-giving is ultimately undergirded and limited by personal preferences. What we appreciate and for what reasons differs as much with respect to humour as with respect to art.

What should be said about these similarities? Are they enough to warrant viewing amusement as a special case of aesthetic appreciation? I think not. Most of the same comparisons could be drawn between amusement and mystical experiences, and yet that would hardly justify assimilating the one to the other. We need to turn to the features of aesthetic experiences which have been suggested as special or unique to the aesthetic, and then see if amusement shares them.

Morreall accepts the traditional characterization of aesthetic experiences as involving a 'distancing' of an object in the sense of attending to its detailed features in abstraction from utilitarian interests. 'We must be sufficiently "distant" from the aesthetic object so that it is not part of our practical life where we think about what we can do with objects, how much they cost, and so forth'.¹⁸ Amusement, he suggests, also fits this description: 'to the extent that we can laugh about something, we have achieved a measure of objectivity and emotional neutrality toward it'.

Now whether or not this is true of all aesthetic experiences, it is not always true of amusement. A great deal of amusement arises as integral to the expression of desires and interests of a very practical sort: to deride, degrade, shock, cheer up, comfort, or impress someone. To laugh at the foolishness of the neighbour we detest is often to enjoy viewing him in a demeaning way. Such amusement and laughter which involves sarcastic derision of others does not reveal an achievement of objectivity or emotional neutrality. Again, the enjoyment of an unmitigatedly smutty joke is more akin to low-grade pornographic pleasures which have generally been denied the status of aesthetic pleasures because they evoke primarily a sexual interest.

The same considerations are fatal to Morreall's claim that appreciation of humour and aesthetic experience involve a 'disinterested attending to some object of awareness for the sake of the experience itself'.¹⁹ Disinterestedness presumably means unbiased and lacking motives which are ulterior to enjoying the incongruous aspects of the object itself. But surely a good deal of humour involves ulterior motives connected with the sorts of practical interests mentioned in the previous paragraph.

Let us set aside Morreall's use of traditional characterizations of aesthetic experiences by reference to special ways of attending or motives and inten-

tions in attending to objects, characterizations which in any case have been given sharp criticism by Dickie and others.²⁰ Consider instead Urmson's more plausible thesis that the specific sorts of satisfactions derived from experiences might appropriately be called aesthetic given certain types of grounds for those satisfactions.²¹

I do not know how to define with precision what those grounds must be, and so I will rest content with roughly Urmson's characterization. Thus, in simpler cases a satisfaction is aesthetic if the primary reasons for the satisfaction are, *per se*, the features constituting the object's appearance or, in the case of literature, the object's abstract pattern of ideas, images, and characters. The idea is that the grounds for aesthetic enjoyment have to do with the way an object appears to our senses or contemplation, rather than with purely economic, moral, religious, sexual, or self-interested considerations.

It seems to me plausible to say that amusement constitutes aesthetic enjoyment when the grounds for the amusement lie primarily or entirely in enjoyment of perceived or conceived incongruities for their own sake. With this as a criterion, amusement will not always constitute aesthetic satisfaction, although much of it will. When the grounds or motives for the enjoyment of humour are, e.g., mainly sexual or aggressive, the amusement is non-aesthetic. Accordingly, it is possible for the same object of amusement to be enjoyed by one person aesthetically and another person non-aesthetically, or by the same person in either of these ways on different occasions. This view blocks Morreall's over-generalizations while uncovering the truth in his view: amusement is aesthetic when the primary reason for enjoying incongruities is the incongruities *per se*, rather than further ulterior reasons.

V

Consider, in conclusion, the objection to the incongruity theory that as rational beings we never enjoy incongruities to any extent for their own sake. For 'incongruity and degradation, as such, always remain unpleasant' and 'by their very nature they must at all times' displease us. Instead, when we enjoy the incongruities in, say, a comedy, it is owing to 'the inward rationality and movement of the fiction' and to 'the stimulation and shaking up of our wits'.

The objection and quoted words are those of Santayana.²² Apparently what led him to make these remarks is a special picture of what it is to be a rational being. In the same context he remarks that 'man, being a rational animal, can like absurdity no better than he can like hunger or cold'.

The best response to this view is to reject the picture of rationality as overly-rationalistic. Indeed, so long as we value much of the capacity to enjoy incongruities for themselves, including the inappropriate, the absurd,

and even occasionally the degrading, we can turn Santayana's picture on its head. Our delight in humorous incongruities reveals something about the kind of rational beings we are.

If, however, we were to follow Santayana in narrowly conceiving of human reason as that part of us which seeks and appreciates order and *congruity*, then it would be worth recalling one of Schopenhauer's barbs. Amusement, he tells us, reveals that it is 'delightful for us to see this strict, untiring, and most troublesome governess, our faculty of reason, for once convicted of inadequacy' in its attempt to discern a perfectly reasonable universe.²³ And who could deny that this delight is eminently healthy when confronted daily with a world so abundantly rich with the absurd and the incongruous?²⁴

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- ⁷ Clark, p. 22.
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- ⁹ For example, Sigmund Freud, *Jokes and Their Relation To The Unconscious*, trans. James Strachey (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1963).
- ¹⁰ Schopenhauer, Vol. I., p. 59.
- ¹¹ Clark, p. 32.
- ¹² John Hersey, *A Single Pebble* (New York: Bantam Books), pp. 30, 34.
- ¹³ Sigmund Freud, *The Complete Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis*, trans. James Strachey (New York: W. W. Norton, 1966), pp. 34ff.
- ¹⁴ Thus I differ from David Pears who viewed amusement as always a momentary reaction, 'Causes and Objects of Some Feelings and Psychological Reactions', reprinted in *Philosophy of Mind*, ed. Stuart Hampshire (New York: Harper and Row, 1966), pp. 143-169.
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- ¹⁶ Monroe Beardsley, 'The Aesthetic Point of View', reprinted in *Philosophy Looks at the Arts*, ed. Joseph Margolis (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1978), p. 22.
- ¹⁷ See Robert A. Sharpe, 'Seven Reasons Why Amusement is an Emotion', *Journal of Value Inquiry*, 9 (1975), pp. 201-3; and F. N. Sibley, 'Aesthetic Concepts', *The Philosophical Review*, 68 (1959), pp. 421-50.
- ¹⁸ Morreall, pp. 60-61.
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American Philosophical Association, March 1981, and the National Linguistic Humor Conference, Arizona State University, April 1982. I am grateful for helpful comments from Kurt Bergel, Shannon Martin, John Morreall, Joseph Runzo, and Thomas Stewart.

CORRESPONDENCE

DEAR SIR,

In James D. Carney's article in this *Journal*, 'A Kripkean Approach to Aesthetic Theories' (Spring 1982, 150-157), a good deal of time is spent responding to views of my own on the subject, in a recent article in *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, entitled: 'Aesthetic Concepts: Some Fresh Considerations' (Summer 1979, 423-432). To my very great surprise, there is no reference to me or my article at all, either in the text of Carney's article, or in the notes, even though on pp. 155-156 there is a passage, without quotation marks or citation, parts of which are lifted bodily from my article. Kivy (427): 'The minuet of Mozart's String Quartet in A, K.464, is a perfect case in point. It is tightly unified, in virtue of being constituted wholly, throughout, by two motives, capable of being played together, and manipulated in various familiar ways, harmonically and contrapuntally, so that there is scarcely a measure in which one, or the other, or both together, are not to be heard'. Carney (155-156): 'For example, the minuet in Mozart's String Quartet in A, K.464, is said to be unified because two motives appear that are manipulated, harmonically and contrapuntally, so that there is no measure in which one, or the other, or both together, are not heard'. In the interest of sound scholarship (not to say fairness), I would like to call the attention of readers of *The British Journal of Aesthetics* to my own article, as well as to Carney's reply to it, in the *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* ('Aesthetic Terms', Summer 1981, 453-454), so that they will be in a better position, if they wish, to evaluate the merits of Carney's arguments, as well as my own.

Yours truly

PETER KIVY

BOOK REVIEWS

The Aesthetic Imperative: Relevance and Responsibility in Arts Education. Curriculum Issues in Arts Education, Vol. 2. Edited by Malcolm Ross. Pergamon Press. 1981. pp. 177. £8.75.

THIS BOOK is the second in a series of three under the editorship of Malcolm Ross. (The first, *The Arts and Personal Growth*, has already been reviewed in this Journal.) It contains a two-page general introduction to the series, followed by a four-page preface in which Ross outlines the background to the volume and guides readers through the papers. There are nine papers by eight authors, growing from Exeter University's Arts Curriculum Project, and in particular a 1980 conference at Dillington House.

As Ross makes clear in the Preface, the interest lies in the location of aesthetic education within the curriculum: that is to say, '... the *relevance* of the arts in the curriculum as a whole and of the special *responsibilities* that fall upon arts teachers by virtue of the subjects they teach' (p. vii). The text reflects a number of such concerns, some, e.g., Ernest Goodman and Peter Abbs approaching the questions from the perspective of a particular art-form, some treating the topics wholesale. The book begins with a classic of this second kind, an important paper by Ross himself entitled 'Hard Core: the predicament of the arts'. This paper is a seminal work on the notion of a core curriculum as applied to the arts, and the wealthy might think that the wider availability of this paper alone justified the purchase of this volume. Yet 'Hard Core' is such public property for those interested in aesthetic education that I shall not comment on it here, but instead follow its lead by concentrating on two of the *general* papers—although to do so is to ignore some excellent papers, especially those later in the volume (dealing with 'more general though

related matters' p. x) and in particular Peter Abbs's 'The Reconstruction of English as Art'.

So I shall compare past and present professors of Education from London University: 'Assessment and Aesthetic Education' by Louis Arnaud Reid and 'Assessment and Evaluation in the Arts' by David Aspin. The contrast is very marked. Reid speaks generally if airily about the character of the arts and the aesthetic, before outlining some standard problems: how to assess aesthetic sensitivity or aesthetic response (if one wants to), what sorts of thing could or should be examined or assessed in relation to our arts classes. He concludes, tentatively, that an over-concentration on skills for its own sake, although facilitating assessment procedures, can only be damaging. Rather the skills are to be encouraged '... as inseparable aspects of good art making' (p. 21). That at least seems right. Yet the argument itself lacks sharpness because clouded with vague generalities about the feelings or emotions.

Now while it seems right to emphasize what might be called 'the subjective dimension' in aesthetic judgement, and hence in aesthetic education, it is surely essential to relate this *practical* 'subjective dimension' (difficulties about whether or not we do as a matter of fact know of others' thoughts and feelings in a particular case) to the general *logical* demands (or requirements) of the publicity of psychological phenomena. Thus Aspin utilizes advances in contemporary philosophy which Reid seems content to ignore. In particular, Reid ignores that whole polemic of Wittgenstein's that is generally called the argument against the possibility of a private language. It might, of course, be urged in reply that, for the audience to which these papers were addressed, such considerations would be beside the

point. But since a major problem is how the subjective dimension is to be treated, it is surely mistaken to begin by assuming ineluctable subjectivity.

Of course Reid acknowledges that 'when we are studying a picture, it is the very complex and interrelated qualities of the picture . . . which we concentrate upon' (p. 17). These lead us to *judgements*, and 'judgements are not about our private states, but about the *picture* as we see it' (p. 17). Yet he prefaces these remarks with a comment which removes their force: 'We certainly have sensations and other quite private experiences . . .'. One needs to know in what *sense* sensations are thought to be private, for if this is some *logical* barrier both the connection between sensation and judgement and the distinctions between judgements based on sensations and judgements based on something else will stand in need of clarification. In ignorance of the replies here, one is left guessing as to the real outcome of potentially interesting discussion.

Aspin (again, by contrast) leaves us in no doubt about his conclusion, for he teaches us (or reminds us of) a great deal by laying down eight principles which, he argues, help us to understand our assessment and judgement of the arts. The check-list is worth recording, for it presents an attractive view of the aesthetic. They are: 1. Aesthetic objects must be seen as unique particulars 'within a specific genre' (p. 45); and hence judged rightly only within the appropriate category. 2. Works of art are "'embodiments" of whole layers and textures of meaning' (p. 45). As such, one would search in vain for *the* (once and for all) meaning of a work of art. 3. Since works of art are perfectly objective, the making of objective judgements (whatever those are) with respect to them is perfectly possible. Like principle 1, this serves to relate works of art to the *form* and *genre* within which they are created. For only when this is taken into account will the judgements be appropriate. 4. Our remarks about art works are essentially 'judgemental' (p. 46) and thus we are not doing something which approximates in any

straightforward way to the making of an empirical judgement, either about our sensations or about the object. And hence aesthetic judgements are not to be modelled on the judgements of science. 5. 'We have to be clear about the kinds of achievements being looked for and the kind of criteria or paradigms being employed in assessment' (p. 46). 6. Courage is needed, for we must stand up to the uninformed and rebut ignorant judgement. That means that we have to acknowledge that there are authorities (at least temporarily) in the field of aesthetic judgement—art-critics, art-theorists and artists may find this rather hard. 7. Recognizing authorities does not involve the abdication of our own responsibilities. (This follows from principle 4.) 8. There is always a variety of possible interpretations of a work of art (principle 2) and of what is or is not a work of art. Aspin speaks of 'the polyphony' (p. 47) of the arts. Thus we should not take too simplistic a view, by assuming that there is always only one right answer here.

Even my crude presentation seems to provide a clear summary of things which, although they have been 'around' in the field of aesthetic education for some time, are now vividly presented and synthesised under Aspin's distinctive handprint. Moreover, Aspin is at pains to emphasize how those features are to be located within a matrix of more general philosophical concerns. Aesthetic education undoubtedly is, in some sense, the education of the feelings. But, as Aspin recognizes (p. 28), our philosophical understanding of those feelings must be predicated on considerations arising from what Aspin prefers to call 'the public language argument' of Wittgenstein.

In Aspin's paper, then, one finds principles which might help with our understanding of both the relevance of the arts in the curriculum and the responsibilities of art teachers. As such, it catches much that is good in the whole volume.

One small quibble: Aspin says that he finds Kuhnian-style ideas of discontinuous paradigms unconvincing in the context of arts education, because it seems to him that

education generally (indeed the concerns of an *open society* generally) should be 'based upon and concerned with the search for truth—in all its various forms' (p. 48). But it seems to me that those very general philosophical considerations (considerations in philosophical logic, that is) which make 'the public language argument' acceptable also require something very like a Kuhnian base, although this is not the place to argue the point. Also the tendencies of Aspin's principles towards authorities whose 'sway' has temporal boundaries and towards there being *various* right or correct interpretations of works of art smack of Kuhnianism.

The volume contains much on which comments are precluded by shortage of space. Other papers are rewarding and suggestive, although it seems to me that only Aspin's should be *compulsory* reading for all students of aesthetic education, and indeed most teachers. For the fundamental issues are put with stimulating clarity. This leads me to a question raised in this Journal's review of the earlier volume in the series: do conference reports automatically deserve publication? And, parenthetically, if they do, is a small expensive hardback with typescript reproduction the best way to do it? Certainly there are many errors. My favourite is 'Bed Bradnack', for 'Ben', on the contents page—where, incidentally, Aspin's title is given incorrectly. And not all the errors can be laid at a typist's door. For example, the reference to Wollheim's *The Sheep and the Ceremony* should follow Ross's 'You are the Music' instead of Victor Heyfron's 'The Relevance of Art in Education'. Perhaps one must read the book to decide the questions. Certainly one may say, as Frege did of his own writings, that there is gold here but it is not all gold.

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The Ruskin Polygon. Essays on the imagination of John Ruskin. Edited by JOHN DIXON HUNT and FAITH M. HOLLAND. Manchester University Press. 1982. pp. 284. £30.

'MOSTLY, MATTERS of any consequence are three-sided, or four-sided, or polygonal',

observed Ruskin in 1858; 'and the trotting round a polygon is severe work for people any way stiff in their opinion'. In the title of the present book Ruskin's notion of a polygonal subject is applied to the man himself, or at least to his 'imaginative achievement', and indeed it is hard to think of a major literary Englishman whose interests ranged more widely.

The volume consists of ten essays, all but one hitherto unpublished, and an edited selection from the Ruskin-Norton correspondence. Some of the essays originated in a symposium at the Humanities Center of the Johns Hopkins University in April 1978, a circumstance which is reflected in the fact that most of the contributors examine Ruskin's work from a literary standpoint; two deal with Ruskin in the context of architecture, and one in the context of painting. The editors acknowledge that the book is primarily concerned with 'the consequences of his intricate mind for our reading of his best texts', and its dominant line of enquiry is an exploration of the layers of meaning carried by Ruskin's metaphors and images. Marc Simpson discusses his imagery of worm, serpent and dragon, and its associations (largely unwelcome to Ruskin) with femininity and sensuality; Stephen Bann conducts a psychoanalytic enquiry into Ruskin's colour vocabulary, particularly into his shades of red; and William Arrowsmith explains the famous 'fire-fly' passage which concludes Ruskin's autobiography in terms of the metaphors of fire and light which he developed during the emotional struggles of his later years. Each of these essays yields valuable insight into the turbulence which lay beneath the public persona.

Trotting round the visual aspects of the polygon, J. M. Crook offers a survey of 'Ruskinian Gothic' buildings, and Edward Kaufman in an original paper relates the 'primitivist' movement in ecclesiastical architecture to Ruskin's geological interests. George L. Hersey's essay, however, flirts dangerously with an illusion familiar to many students of Ruskin—the illusion that one aspect of his work is the essential and

fundamental Ruskin. According to Hersey, Ruskin's mind was characterized by 'optical truth', defined by reference to the qualities of resolution, minute detail and overall lighting which are often to be found in early topographical daguerreotypes. This account fits some of Ruskin's drawings well enough, and some of those by Holman Hunt which he admired; it also fits some of his criticism in the first volume of *Modern Painters*. But what of Ruskin's response to his two abiding heroes of the brush, Turner and Tintoretto? This, and much else in Ruskin's approach to painting, goes far beyond any such 'optical truth', a concept which seems particularly inadequate in an essay which seeks to place Ruskin in a grand context of European commentators extending from Leonardo to Baudelaire. Something of the same tendency to 'adopt' Ruskin is to be found in Brian Maidment's discussion of Ruskin's later and more miscellaneous works: we are told that Ruskin was 'above all an occasional writer', whose publications took the form of lecture texts, articles, letters and textbooks; *Modern Painters*, *Seven Lamps* and *The Stones of Venice*, which comprise nine substantial volumes, are dismissed as 'the three early art books'.

Brian Maidment's is nevertheless an excellent contribution, clearly summarizing the means by which, in the years immediately before and after Ruskin's death, his guardians, his publisher and his editors contrived to present to the public a sanitized image of the Victorian sage, while effectively emasculating his message. Examples of this very process are on hand elsewhere in the book, for Jeffrey Spear's selection of Ruskin's letters restores to us a number of passages over-tactfully omitted from the correspondence published in 1913. Norton, one of Ruskin's few close friends, was so anxious to protect the latter's posthumous reputation that he opposed the creation of the monumental Library Edition, by Cook and Wedderburn, which has become the standard and essential edition of Ruskin's works. It seems that those who were closest to Ruskin did him the greatest disservice, albeit unwittingly. The most

sympathetic of his disciples at this time never met him: Marcel Proust, who embarked upon a *pèlerinage ruskinien*, and (as Richard Macksey skilfully describes) assimilated many Ruskinian qualities into his own creative imagination.

This is the second collection of essays on Ruskin to be published within twelve months, and there will be many more to follow. Clearly there is a Ruskin for everyone. Previous commentators have seen him as a precursor of Lenin, of Roger Fry, and of Tolstoy; in the present volume we learn that Ruskin anticipated Freud, T. S. Eliot, and Sherlock Holmes. Ruskin's work is a rich mine, and the quarrying has scarcely begun.

PATRICK CONNER

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Art Gallery & Museums, Brighton*

Metacriticism. By SURESH RAVAL. University of Georgia Press. 1981. pp. xiv + 289. \$18.

TRUE TO its terse title, this book provides extensive discussion of several key concepts of modern literary criticism, together with critical exposition of many important contemporary critical theories. By means of this metacritical analysis Raval attempts to furnish 'a more adequate and comprehensive understanding of the concept of criticism' (p. xii) and also reach a general characterization of 'the logic of inquiry in criticism'. The book is divided into two parts. The first part, after a brief, unrewarding, and essentially gratuitous study of Kantian aesthetics and its influence on the idealist aesthetics of Hegel, Croce and Bosanquet, proceeds to devote individual chapters to each of the following important critical concepts: *creativity*, *intention*, *poetic autonomy*, and *affective response*. The analysis of these concepts and of the rival theories applied to them by many influential critical theorists (e.g., Eliot, Richards, Brooks, Wimsatt, Beardsley, Fish, Bloom, Hirsch, Poulet, Holland, and the French psychoanalytic thinker, Jacques Lacan) helps Raval to argue for his first major thesis: that 'the concept of criticism . . . [is] a highly com-

plex, essentially contested and contestable one' (p. 54). Indeed it seems that the bulk of his evidence and argument for this convincing view consists in his demonstration that these central and allegedly formative critical concepts are themselves essentially contested.

The second part of the book goes on to reinforce the thesis of criticism's essentially contested character while developing what is apparently Raval's second main objective: 'the most important question of articulating the logic of inquiry in criticism' (p. 144). The argument here, which is often unclear and hard to follow, seems to be that because of the essentially contested nature of critical concepts, there can be no real or lasting consensus as to the correct methods or categories of inquiry, and that therefore critical inquiry inevitably involves a variety of rival modes and procedures. Raval then argues that criticism's 'specific mode of inquiry' is essentially different from that of science in that it is not aimed at problem solving, not based on consensus regarding problems and methods, and does not achieve an ultimately linear growth of knowledge. Criticism is rather a complex 'hermeneutical discipline' (Gadamer is a major force in this book); and its logic cannot be reduced to induction or deduction, but is rather, 'at its best', of a 'complex nondeductive and noninductive' nature (p. 186). Moreover, criticism's debates are ultimately not over objective critical truth but rather concern and arise from differing fundamental critical commitments which guide a critic's response and critical decision and which 'can never be falsified'. (Here Raval's theory shows a marked but unacknowledged similarity to C. L. Stevenson's metacritical prescriptivism.)

Despite his constant and, I think, correct emphasis on the plurality of critical modes and frameworks, Raval wisely insists that critical debates are indeed real and substantive, and that therefore we must not maintain that rival forms of criticism are totally incommensurable, autonomous, and immune from mutual criticism; for such a view would deprive critical debate of sig-

nificance. Raval's aim, then, is to steer a middle course between the 'rigidity' of monolithic critical objectivism and the 'irrationalism' of critical subjectivity and scepticism. Thus, after distinguishing criticism from science and attacking the critical scientism of Richards and Frye, Raval devotes a long chapter to deconstructionist theory where the views of Derrida and de Man are critically examined. The book then closes with a chapter on the concept of metacriticism (which Raval distinguishes from critical theory and philosophical aesthetics), a brief conclusion, and a rather unrewarding four-page appendix on Popper, Kuhn, and the logic of scientific inquiry.

Raval maintains that besides its other aims, his book attempts 'to bridge' a troubling and widening 'gulf between literary criticism and analytic philosophy' (p. xiii). Apparently the recent popularity of structuralist, deconstructionist, and phenomenological critical theory has misled Raval into believing that there indeed exists such a wide gulf to be bridged. However, strong links between literary criticism and analytic philosophy can be traced back to Richards; and in the last twenty-five years there have been many books and countless articles which have effectively and fruitfully linked these disciplines, as any reader of this Journal should know. Compared to many of these works, Raval's bridge is decidedly unimpressive. For though the book is well organized, well informed, and sometimes instructive, and even more sadly, though some of its main ideas seem very reasonable, if not indeed basically right, Raval's effort is ultimately disappointing. For most of the potential power and value of his views is vitiated by the excessive looseness, generality, and lack of rigour of the arguments and discussion which support them. I only have space here for two examples of this weakness.

Though the first part of the book is largely devoted to showing that 'criticism' and many of its sub-concepts are essentially, contested concepts in Gallie's technical sense, Raval gives no real explanation of this notion, which Gallie in fact elucidated

with admirable clarity and detail. Gallie's seven conditions for essentially contested concepts are not even listed, let alone summarized or discussed, and thus the book provides no solid basis for rigorously determining whether or not the critical concepts it discusses really meet all seven conditions and are in Gallie's sense essentially contested. A second and still more pervasive manifestation of Raval's vitiating generality is that for all his insistence on the variety of modes and procedures in criticism, he always seems to be treating and making assertions about criticism (or critical inquiry) as an undifferentiated whole. Most critical theorists distinguish between the critical activities of interpretation and evaluation (still others add description) and maintain that these activities, though closely related, are logically distinct and thus deserve individual treatment. Raval sadly does not provide this, and his general assertions about criticism confusingly seem to be sometimes aimed at evaluation and other times at interpretation. Apparently he assumes that criticism's essential logic or 'specific mode of inquiry' underlies or is shared by these different critical tasks. However, the question of whether or not there exists a common logic underlying the different tasks of critical inquiry and the variety of ways in which they are pursued is an issue which can only be adequately resolved when the variety of modes of critical inquiry has been more precisely and systematically presented and classified than Raval has done in this book.

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The Mind's Best Work. By D. N. PERKINS.
Harvard University Press. 1981. pp. ix
+ 314. £12.95.

THE SUBJECT of this book is creativity, particularly in the arts and in science. Unlike Arthur Koestler and most previous writers on this theme, D. N. Perkins is not interested to analyse the sort of mental products which are called 'creative' but confines his purpose to investigating the nature of the mental processes by which 'creative' results

are achieved. By and large his answer is that there are no special mental processes conducive to results of the sort we call 'creative' ('I want to show how creating in the arts and sciences is a natural comprehensible extension and orchestration of ordinary everyday abilities of perception, understanding, memory, and so on . . .' p. 4) and there are no special abilities confined to creative people or manifested by creative people in a greater degree than by others ('There is no strong evidence that creativity derives principally from specifically creative abilities' p. 256). After a critical examination of various proposals which have been advanced for a special creative ability he awards the palm to what Malcolm Westcott called 'intuition' and which he prefers to call 'insight' (pp. 253-6). But earlier we have been told that 'sudden insight can be explained in terms of recognizing, realizing and reasoning, to a considerable extent' (p. 91). Somewhat curiously he accepts that personality tests such as those conducted by Frank Barron in California and by Getzels and Csikszentmihalyi at the Art Institute School of Chicago do 'demonstrate that there is such a thing as a creative personality'. But he adds: 'The personality approach goes in circles, a person with a creative personality turning out to mean about the same thing as a person who behaves creatively' (pp. 269-270). His main purpose is to show how 'ordinary kinds of mental processes [can] accomplish extraordinary acts of creation' (p. 97).

Creativity is 'whatever people have that leads to creative results'. In his definition of this Perkins is content to accept the stereotyped restraints which demand originality combined with high quality (p. 6), which of course rule out mere eccentricity, but he is not interested to broach the difficult problems introduced by considerations of subjective and objective criteria. Yet how many of us are familiar with the experience of producing a fine painting or a fine piece of writing which others dismiss as mediocre, a brilliant new idea or piece of research which turns out to be old hat. Throughout the book he uses 'discovery' and 'invention' as synonyms of 'creation'

(although he does not discuss technological invention). Solving riddles and puzzles, thinking up selling lines for commercial products, and so on, are used as examples of creative activity. There has come into fashion in educational circles a use of the term 'creative' to describe all work done in art classes, classes in 'creative writing', even 'creative play', as distinct from learning history, mathematics or science. The book shows some sympathy with this outlook. The writer has himself been responsible for a considerable volume of research into the mental processes involved, using a method of introspection consisting of 'stream of consciousness' monologues by persons while actually engaged in 'creative' work. His subjects included students, amateur and 'professional' poets and painters, persons designing trademarks, thinking up titles for stories or cartoons, etc. One cannot but wonder whether the picture of creative mental activity presented to us may not be largely due to the uncritical and indiscriminating conception of what constitutes creative activity and a creative result, whether there is really the sort of continuity which the author postulates between the mental processes revealed by mediocre work and the mental processes underlying 'the furthest reaches of creative achievement'. D. N. Perkins faces the question and boldly answers in the affirmative (p. 273).

One of his recurrent methods is to debunk traditional ideas about creativity deriving from reports of the great masters of creation. He shows reasons (perhaps not quite so convincing as he would have us believe) to doubt the report given by Coleridge about the creation of *Kubla Khan* and Poe's account of *The Raven* and he criticizes, though respectfully, Rudolph Arnhem's account of the coming into being of Picasso's *Guernica*. Poincaré's well-known story of the moment of illumination which gave him the transformation for the Fuchsian functions may well be 'a case of faulty observation'. Marie Curie's isolation of radium depended on dedication and drive. (The even more telling discovery of insulin by team-work is not mentioned.) He men-

tions at some length the more gradual way in which both Darwin and Wallace were led to a theory of evolution, discounting the statement of both that the actual discovery came in a flash of insight. Although he does not altogether repudiate 'incubation' of a problem, he rejects the theory that protracted unconscious thinking exists and can lead to a moment of illumination. And he attributes a surprising degree of responsibility to sheer chance. Among his many instances of chance, not only were both Darwin and Wallace led to the idea of evolution by the accident of reading Malthus, but 'A fortunate match between Einstein's values and the discoveries waiting to be made allowed Einstein to be the one to make them'.

In science many, perhaps most, revolutionary theories have been triggered off by a deep dissatisfaction with contradictions or inelegancies in existing theory. While he mentions this in connection with Einstein, Perkins does not expatiate upon it or develop its implications for creativity. On the other hand he attributes a central importance to a purposive orientation without, however, managing to show that creative mental processes are more purpose-controlled than mental activity in general, or that purposive endeavour tends on the whole to creativity. Despite much purposive mentation, the scientific world has been waiting for more than half a century for another fortunate accident which would lead to a theory reconciling the wave and the particle behaviour of elementary particles under experimental conditions. In the fine arts, on the other hand, the deliberate purpose to be recognized as original is a major mistake rampant among mediocre artists and encouraged by gallery owners today.

Perkins devotes considerable space to discussing the functions of critical judgement during the process of creation. His experimental subjects monitored their work in progress on the look-out for flaws and when these appeared corrected them in accordance with implicitly accepted standards to do with unity and balance, avoidance of clichés, bad rhymes, etc. There is much

good advice and sound commonsense here such as might be expected from a teacher to a large and mixed class of students—Feeling is important but 'The maker's feelings of rightness or wrongness reveal only rather unreliably the actual state of affairs'. Focusing attention part by part, aspect by aspect, 'maximizes sensitivity' but narrowing of focus may impede our noticing features outside the focus and 'the maker expecting to notice whatever needs attention stays open to everything at once'. Moreover, 'piecemeal evaluation may provide a seriously distorted picture of the whole' (pp. 112–113). We are even told that pedestrian work is not bad because of a lot of flaws but because it is dull, banal, lacking kick; there is something that it misses. But surely the model upon which all this commonsense is based is a wrong model, although it no doubt corresponds to the way in which an uncreative artist works. If it is creative at all, every work of art is a unique creation, a unity of composition which transcends the contributions of its separate parts. It has sometimes been more illuminatingly said that the creative artist is driven and guided by a non-verbal idea of this unity, which only emerges fully into consciousness when the work is complete. It is in relation to this idea, not by the application of general principles, that critical evaluation proceeds during the making of the work. This is the distinctive mark of creative making in the arts. Therefore any change at any stage to any detail in the work is likely to involve corresponding changes throughout the whole. This conception of creative making in the arts did not come to the surface in the experimental data on the basis of which the book was conceived and written.

The book is very far-ranging, more notable for practical good sense than for theoretical penetration. It is written with a mixture of whimsy and pep such as one attributes to a successful teacher and it is illustrated by the author's own drawings, which have a similar refreshing quality, lacking memorability.

HAROLD OSBORNE

The Psychology of Musical Ability. By ROSAMUND SHUTER-DYSON and CLIVE GABRIEL. Methuen. 1981. pp. 354. £17.95. This is the second edition of Rosamund Shuter's book originally published in 1968. (The first edition was reviewed in these columns in 1969.) The book has been considerably updated and a new section on cognitive psychology of music added.

The authors of *The Psychology of Musical Ability* have set themselves the task of searching for answers to some important questions: 'What in fact makes a musician? What distinguishes the musician from the rest of mankind? Why should one infant in the cradle seem so much more responsive to music than another? . . . Is there a sense in which we are all musical? How can we educate children to enjoy and truly appreciate a wide variety of music?' These are formidable questions encompassing such controversial topics as heredity versus environment, the concept of musical ability, music appreciation, the creative impulse, music education, etc. These questions are never really answered, mainly because the technique employed is to 'collate and evaluate psychological studies of musical ability and attainment in order to make the results more widely accessible to all who are interested in music, whether as performers, teachers or listeners' (p. XIII).

The book is divided into five parts: In part 1 the concept of musical ability is mentioned followed by a review of methods by which musicians and psychologists have tried ways of assessing musical ability and achievement. Part 2 deals with tests of the development of musical ability from birth to adulthood. Part 3 describes tests of the determinants of musical ability. Part 4 offers a good outline of cognitive and neurological studies relevant to musical ability. Part 5 is a summary of conclusions and some implications for music education are discussed.

No attempt is made to analyse the concept of musical ability. Instead we are given summaries of various views on the importance of specific skills such as memory, rhythm recognition, etc. A distinction is drawn between aptitude as the potential for

learning and attainment or achievement as a measure of what has been learned. This is equated with Hebb's intelligence A (innate potential) and intelligence B (present mental efficiency). As a result the various tests designed to test tonal, rhythmic, melodic and interval discriminations throw no light whatever on musical ability conceived as performing ability, composing or appreciating music. The aptitudes tested are certainly necessary but not sufficient conditions for the various kinds of musical abilities mentioned.

The question whether musical ability is one ability made up of several homogeneous aspects or several different kinds of abilities is raised a number of times but again never answered beyond a statement of preference for the singular term on grounds of convenience. The authors mention in passing (p. 67) that aural abilities may be a prerequisite for, but are no guarantee of, performing ability; this is followed by a review of tests on dexterity. There is no discussion of serious difficulties about what conclusions one is entitled to draw from the results of the tests given this important qualification. The reader gets the feeling of being trapped in a vicious circle; explanations of differences in ability are discoverable by testing but we are warned that the reservation 'musical ability as assessed by the such and such test' needs to be read into the text.

Yet the book admirably fulfils its purpose of collating and evaluating psychological studies of musical ability and attainment in order to make the results of such research more accessible to all who are interested in music, music education or psychology. The authors have collected the available research material, a colossal task in itself, which they have organized well into a flowing sequence thus producing an up-to-date, invaluable annotated bibliography. The book offers a most comprehensive account of musical ability tests as compared with other ability tests, tests of attainment, interest in music, results of genetic studies of musical ability, effects of specific practice and music lessons

and tests of the development of musical ability.

Such comments as are offered on the results of the various tests are sparse, utterly non-committal, to the point where contradictory results are offered without any discussion of their conflicting merits or demerits.

The new section on cognitive psychology and music consists of a brief description of the kind of work that is going on in this area. The book is, however, mainly concerned with psychometric and educational procedures and, as a result, the short section on cognitive psychology does not integrate with the rest of the book.

Indexes and references are carefully constructed. They contain detailed descriptions of the various tests and related statistical information.

The authors have undoubtedly succeeded in making comprehensive information available in one book—as such the book is invaluable. For anyone interested in a survey of work done in the field of psychometrics this book cannot be bettered. But this is supposed to be a book about music; apart from very few actual music examples there is little to stimulate or help the musician be he a teacher or performer.

F. BERENSON

Moments of Vision. By KENNETH CLARK. John Murray. 1981. pp. 191. £9.50.

IN THE first volume of his autobiography, *Another Part of the Wood*, Lord Clark described how, at the age of seven, he saw for the first time some examples of Japanese flower-painting. He was 'struck dumb with delight', and the whole event seemed in retrospect to be 'a test tube specimen of our poor old friend the "pure aesthetic sensation"'. That concept, (he admitted straightaway) 'once received in the highest intellectual society, would now dare scarcely to show its head in a provincial discussion group'. Well, whatever the philosophers may make of that, it represents the kind of experience that has provided the mainspring for one of the most illuminating

and intelligent critics of our time. This book, which consists chiefly of the scripts of lectures that Clark has given over the past thirty years, pursues several threads of what he himself calls 'applied aesthetics' (the quotation marks are his). Certainly no reader of this journal should expect tight philosophical arguments. 'There are very few people', he writes, 'who have never had an aesthetic experience, either from the sound of a band or the sight of a sunset or the action of a horse. The words "beauty" and "beautiful" often pass the lips of those who have never looked at a work of art—oftener, perhaps, than they pass the lips of museum curators—and some meaning must be attached to them' (p. 79). Yes and no. Clark did not bore his original audience by attempting systematically to unravel the complexities of such statements, nor does he bore us. Yet we should not be deceived. Although the surface presentation of most of these pieces is relaxed and urbane, and the authorial pose suave, even at times a little smug, Clark has much that is interesting and original to say. *Moments of Vision* can plausibly be described as a kind of spiritual autobiography which serves to complement and deepen the more entertaining but in a way more 'official' and therefore more superficial performance from which I quoted at the beginning of this review.

Thus the fine essay on Bernard Berenson (chapter eight) complements the lighter and more amusing treatment accorded that famous figure in chapter four of *Another Part of the Wood*, and raises a topic that crops up frequently throughout Clark's own writings: the nature of our responses to works of art. Berenson had been a pupil of William James and determined to find some non-mystical explanation for the pleasure we find in works of art. Taking a clue from Goethe, he decided that great art must be 'life enhancing', and one of the ways it achieves this is by making the spectator imagine that he or she has real physical feelings when contemplating a picture or a piece of sculpture. Clark has a good deal of sympathy with this view: 'It has a grain of

truth in it. Ultimately our sense of what is real is confirmed by what we can touch; and to stimulate our "ideated sensations" of touch could well be life-enhancing' (p. 113). 'Obviously', he adds, 'these ideated sensations do not provide a complete explanation of why we enjoy pictures. They don't take us all the way, but such progress as we make is on solid ground. They are not simply incantations, as is most writing about aesthetics' (p. 114). This last remark is aimed at the 'plastic sequences' of Roger Fry, and the 'significant form' of Clive Bell. 'And even the more respectable aesthetic theories of the past—for example those based on laws of proportion—end up in magic, though we may agree that the magic of numbers is a very ancient and honourable one' (p. 124). On the other hand, Clark concludes rather briskly, 'I find that his [Berenson's] aesthetic theory really works, and is a valuable basis for criticism' (p. 124).

A book like this, with eleven essentially disparate chapters, is difficult to review. The Berenson chapter seemed to me to be the most compelling, but in order to give some idea of the range of subject-matter I shall look briefly at chapter five, which has the rather daunting title, 'Art and Society'.

As long as we accept his apologies for having 'foolishly accepted invitations' to lecture on such topics we can settle back and enjoy the results. This is a jungle into which few professional art historians would nowadays dare to venture, so that the day-to-day exploration has been left very largely to the Marxists, whose findings Clark describes as 'positively misleading'. Hoping to avoid the high speculative plane of Hegel and Ruskin, Clark takes his bearings from history. What has been the relation of the visual arts and society in the past? Can any conclusions be drawn for our own time?

With characteristic confidence (and in spite of his ostensible misgivings) Clark defines art as a sacrament, the outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace. This is a lively and provocative start, and much of what he says in the chapter that follows, and indeed throughout his writings

as a whole, springs from this definition. Although he does not pursue the religious parallel he would probably accept that art ought to convey some sort of power or enlightenment, some kind of grace, to the spectator. But would he say, following this analogy a little further, that the artist must have the intention of bestowing, and the spectator must be receptive to, this grace? As St. Thomas himself remarked, 'not all theologians are agreed on how the sacraments work'.

One of Clark's less controversial premises is that all great art of the type he calls 'image art', as opposed to 'ornament', has been made by and for a tiny minority. Its function has usually been to illustrate or to confirm a system of belief held by that élite. Ornament similarly has never existed solely to please the eye. It is an assertion of status, inseparable from hierarchy. The carvings on the main portal of a cathedral, or above the central window of a Renaissance palace, confer status on those points of the building. 'In a democratic building', he observes, 'where all windows are equal, no ornament is possible, though I understand that the higher executives can have more windows' (p. 66). Thus we are led, gently and wittily, to the central problem of this chapter, and

to one of the most intractable historical puzzles of all. For, as Clark notes, although the greatest art of the past was the creation of a minority, it was accepted by the majority eagerly and with a sense of participation. Why does this vital link between art and society no longer exist? Why is it that for the modern mass arts of cinema, television or wholesale furnishing, the tastes of the artistic minority can safely be ignored as 'irrelevant in any serious calculation', or so it seems to Clark (p. 73). One answer he offers is that the real creative effort of the twentieth century has been directed to different ends, notably into science. The research scientist is the object of popular interest and approval, universities compete for his favours with millions of pounds worth of plant and equipment. 'So he goes to work, as Titian once did, confident that he will succeed, because he knows that everyone needs him' (p. 79).

One small criticism of this well-produced and eminently readable book is that a certain amount of repetition occurs. For example, Yeats's versification of Pater's description of the *Mona Lisa* is recounted three times (p. 86, p. 135, and p. 153).

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Aesthetics and the Sociology of Art

Janet Wolff

AESTHETICS AND THE SOCIOLOGY OF ART offers an account of aesthetics which is both sociologically informed and sensitive to the specific nature of cultural products.

Janet Wolff provides here a lucid account of two divergent tendencies in the study of aesthetics. At the one extreme, traditional aestheticians have assumed that art and literature are wholly independent, following only the laws and inspiration of artists and artistic movements, and that the question of aesthetic value is accordingly unproblematic. At the other extreme, some sociologists have treated works of art as no more than manifestations of the socio-economic circumstances which produce them, arguing that aesthetic value is therefore an entirely relative matter.

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January 1983 128 pages 0 04 301152 7 Hardback £10.95 0 04 301153 5 Paperback £4.95
Controversies in Sociology Series: No. 14

George Allen & Unwin
PO Box 18, Park Lane,
Hemel Hempstead, Herts HP2 4TE, England.

George
Allen & Unwin
& CO. LTD.
LONDON
NEW YORK
SYDNEY

THE JOURNAL OF

AESTHETICS

AND ART CRITICISM

VOLUME XLI

FALL 1982

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THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF AESTHETICS

VOLUME 23 NUMBER 3 SUMMER 1983

Published for The British Society of Aesthetics
by Oxford University Press

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Subscriptions to the Journal from institutions and other non-members of the Society should be sent to the Journals Subscription Department, Oxford University Press, Walton Street, Oxford OX2 6DP. The rates for 1983 (four issues) are US \$49 for subscribers in the USA, £21 for those in the UK, and £24 elsewhere. The prices of single issues are US \$15, UK £6, elsewhere £7. All dispatches are post free and those to the USA are air-speeded.

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HUME'S NEIGHBOUR'S WIFE: AN ESSAY ON THE EVOLUTION OF HUME'S AESTHETICS

Peter Kivy

It is my purpose here to lay bare the changes—the progress, if you will—in the 'aesthetic sentiment' theory, from Francis Hutcheson's basically non-epistemic account of aesthetic perception to the more concept-laden one of Hume. One of the principal forces at work, I shall argue, in driving Hume to a more satisfactory mix of knowledge (or belief) with 'sentiment' in aesthetic perception was the beneficial effect of moral theory which, in the nature of the case, had to provide a prominent place for belief in moral perception, even when it was insisted, as Hume did, that moral distinctions issue from a moral 'sense'. Hutcheson and Hume both claimed that, in one way or another, the same theory served for both moral and aesthetic distinctions. That being the case, a reciprocal influence was set in motion which, I believe, was from the aesthetic to the moral in Hutcheson's early work, but which moved in just the opposite way—from the moral to the aesthetic—in Hume. It is this general theme that I would like to pursue.

I

I will begin where I believe the discipline of philosophical aesthetics begins, at least as I understand that discipline: with Hutcheson's *Inquiry Concerning Beauty, Order, Harmony, Design*, the first of the two treatises that comprise his *Inquiry into the Original of our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue* of 1725.

Hutcheson, it will be recalled, thought that the term 'beautiful' has reference to a Lockean 'idea' of perception: 'the word *beauty*', he wrote, 'is taken for the *idea raised in us*, and a *sense of beauty for our power of receiving this idea*.'¹ And the property in objects which causes us, upon perceiving them, to have this idea, Hutcheson believed, by induction, to be what he called most of the time *uniformity amidst variety*.

The figures that excite in us the ideas of beauty seem to be those in which there is *uniformity amidst variety* . . . [W]here the uniformity of bodies is equal, the beauty is as the variety; and where the variety is equal, the beauty is as the uniformity.²

It is abundantly clear, I think, that Hutcheson's model for aesthetic perception, at least in the first edition of his first *Inquiry*, is to be found in Locke, and, particularly, in Locke's account of secondary qualities. The idea of beauty might be thought to correspond (say) to the sensation of redness, while *uniformity amidst variety* would find its analogue in the micro-structure of matter which, under the appropriate conditions, produces the sensation in a normal observer. The disanalogy, of course, aside from the obvious one that *uniformity amidst variety* is *not* micro-structure, lies in the fact that Hutcheson thought he knew what it was in objects responsible for the arousal of the idea of beauty, whereas the Lockean was ignorant—permanently so, some thought—as to what it might be in the micro-structure of matter responsible for the arousal of colour sensations in general, or the sensation of redness in particular. I have spent some time elsewhere explaining how this disanalogy wreaked havoc with Hutcheson's way of formulating his theory.³ But, happily, this is irrelevant to my present concerns. What I do want to underscore is that Hutcheson is easily misunderstood here in one particular way—was, in fact, by his rationalist critics—and this misunderstanding must be avoided if we are to get straight what advance Hume made on Hutcheson's aesthetic theory.

There is nothing inherently implausible about citing *uniformity amidst variety* as at least one beautiful, or aesthetic, feature of objects, if not the only one. But what one naturally assumes is happening with regard to it is something along the following lines. I perceive an object. I perceive *that* it possesses *uniformity amidst variety*. And if there is a sentiment or idea of beauty in the case at all, it is the *enjoyment* I get out of knowingly, consciously savouring the feature of *uniformity amidst variety* which I have come to perceive in the object. This surely must have been something like what John Balguy, for example, made of Hutcheson's account of beauty when he insisted, *contra* Hutcheson, that knowing an object possesses *uniformity amidst variety*, or possesses any other system of parts in relation to one another, is a function of reasoning as well as sensing.

The ingenious Author of the *Enquiry into the Original of our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue* . . . fixed Beauty on such a Foundation, as seems to me entirely inconsistent with his own Notion. For are not *Uniformity and Variety* real *Relations* belonging to the *Objects* themselves? . . . However Sense may convey to us the Ideas of external *Objects*, yet the *Relations* between them no *Sense* can reach.⁴

But surely such criticism is based on a misreading of Hutcheson. Whatever he *should* have said about *uniformity amidst variety*, and its relation to the beautiful, what he *did* say is that *uniformity amidst variety* causes the idea of beauty to arise in us much in the way the Lockean would say the micro-structure of matter causes the sensation of redness to arise. And I no more need know that an object possesses *uniformity amidst variety* to have

the idea aroused by it, than I need know, *per impossibile* in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, that an object has micro-structure *xyz*, to have the sensation of redness aroused, nor need I even know that matter has a micro-structure at all, or that if it does, it has anything to do with colour perception. This (and only this) is what I mean to assert when I say that Hutcheson's was a non-epistemic theory of aesthetic perception. In recent years, philosophers of perception have, in some circles anyway, divided themselves up into those who assert that if someone perceives something or other, he or she necessarily thereby or therein acquires some belief or other, and those who assert that there is at least some basic perceiving not necessarily involving the acquisition of beliefs or knowledge. The former view has been denominated 'epistemic', and the latter 'non-epistemic'; and this is the source of my contrast between Hutcheson and Hume as regards the perception of beauty. But, I hasten to add, by describing Hutcheson's theory as non-epistemic, I do not mean to say that it is non-epistemic altogether: that is to say, I do not mean to suggest or imply that, on Hutcheson's view, I can perceive beauty without acquiring any beliefs or knowledge at all.

It should also be borne in mind, in this regard, that in describing Hutcheson's theory of aesthetic perception as non-epistemic, I refer only to the perception of what he calls 'absolute' beauty. 'Relative' beauty, the beauty of 'imitation', is something else again, although Hutcheson's teaching here is murky. Certainly we must, Hutcheson implies, know that X is an imitation of Y in order to have the idea of beauty aroused by X *qua* imitation. But even here there is a subliminal causal nexus at work, since on Hutcheson's view, the idea of beauty, even in the case of the relative kind, is aroused by a kind of *uniformity amidst variety*:

what we call *relative* [beauty] is that which is apprehended in any object commonly considered as an *imitation* of some original. And this beauty is founded on a conformity, or a kind of unity between the original and the copy.⁵

Thus, even in the case of the beauty of representation, what arouses the idea of beauty is not, directly, my perceiving that X is a representation of Y, although that is a necessary condition. Rather, the idea is aroused, just as in the case of absolute beauty, by a 'quality' of all imitations, lying, as it were, beneath the surface—'a conformity, or a kind of unity'—of which the perceiver may very well not be aware. And in any case, what was always remembered, understood, and sometimes misunderstood (as we have just seen) by Hutcheson's contemporaries and intellectual progeny as *his* theory of beauty was his doctrine of *absolute* beauty: that is the doctrine that stuck to his name, that influenced his age, and that was always in one's mind when one mentioned Hutcheson's aesthetic teaching. So whatever the vagaries of his notion of relative beauty may be, and however it may

muddy the non-epistemic waters, the doctrine that counted—the doctrine of absolute beauty—was unequivocally non-epistemic in the way outlined above. *That* was the theory that, I shall claim, Hume had to escape.

Having, then, laid out what, in the above sense, is Hutcheson's *non-epistemic* theory of aesthetic perception, let me turn now to Hume's *Treatise*, for the purpose of seeing what of this theory survives in that place, and what has undergone change in the direction of a more epistemic account.

II

It is palpably obvious, to start with, but not unworthy of mention, that Hutcheson begins his *Inquiry into . . . Beauty and Virtue* with a treatise on aesthetics, and moves on, from there, to the one on moral theory. This is neither an accident of publication nor merely a record of the order of discovery, but the order which, in Hutcheson's view, reflects the nature of the case. Aesthetics is epistemologically prior to moral theory: from a consideration of beauty we come to see that the right and the good have a similar foundation.

Equally obvious, and no less worthy of note, is that Hume's *Treatise* contains no extended treatment of aesthetics at all, either before, after, or in any other relation to his moral theory. It is certainly true that Hume's moral talk, like Hutcheson's, is permeated with aesthetic terms and images, of which I shall have more to say in a moment. But in general, this is rather the background noise left by Hutcheson's 'big bang' than the direction in which Hume's thought is moving in moral theory or aesthetics. Most of the remarks on aesthetic topics occur in two very distinct contexts: (1) to clarify some point being made in moral theory; or (2) sketchily to indicate, much in the manner of recent emotivist ethics, how the system being touted can, if one had the time or inclination, be made to accommodate aesthetic distinctions as well as moral ones without any alteration in principle. And in both of these contexts, the weight and sheer bulk of the moral argumentation is such as to bend the aesthetic theory quite into its own shape. In the *Treatise*, unlike Hutcheson's *Inquiry into . . . Beauty and Virtue*, aesthetics is being 'moralized', rather than the other way round—an important point to remember being, however, that it is a morality already 'aestheticized' by Hume's esteemed predecessor.

If one comes from Hutcheson's first *Inquiry* to the *Treatise*, a casual reading of Book III will immediately suggest that Hume was seeing moral perception in a distinctly aesthetic way; for, as I remarked above, his language in this regard is suffused with aesthetic terms and images. Consider, for example, the following statement of Hume's often repeated claim that sense, not reason, is the source of moral distinctions. Hume writes: 'The approbation of moral qualities most certainly is not deriv'd from

reason, or any comparison of ideas; but proceeds entirely from a moral taste, and from certain sentiments of pleasure or disgust, which arise upon the contemplation and view of particular qualities or characters.⁶ The reference to moral *taste*, rather than (say) to a moral sense, is obvious enough to require no further comment. What is far more important is the image of moral perception as a kind of aesthetic 'contemplation' or 'viewing', as if Hume had in mind the way I might stand before a scenic panorama, contemplating the vista aesthetically, taking in the view, and being moved to aesthetic rapture by the grandeur of what is before me. And so, likewise, I 'view' or 'contemplate' the human scene, while 'certain sentiments of pleasure or disgust . . . arise upon the contemplation or view . . .'.

I say that a *casual* reading of Hume might suggest this to one coming to him from Hutcheson's first *Inquiry*. But, of course, this is hardly what Hume has in mind, or means to convey with such seemingly 'aesthetic' terms as 'contemplate' or 'view'. It is not some enraptured, non-epistemic, Hutchesonian aesthetic perception that Hume is talking about; on the contrary, the moral context always makes clear that to 'view' or to 'contemplate' a character or action in the moral way is to scrutinize and meditate over what one sees. A person, Hume remarks, in his discussion of Wollaston, 'who thro' a window sees any lewd behaviour of mine with my neighbour's wife, may be so simple as to imagine she is certainly my own.'⁷ Simple or not, however, the voyeur must engage in some hypothesizing or other to make any moral judgement at all: which is to say, to experience a moral sentiment of approval or disapproval. One cannot simply experience Hume's behaviour as an aesthetic play of visual sensations. The moral question is not whether Hume's behaviour is well choreographed, but whether it is wicked; and that, of course, requires knowing, or believing whether or not Hume is married to his female companion.

What, then, of Hume's views on aesthetic perception, as revealed here and there in the *Treatise*? We are told often enough that the beautiful is determined much in the same way as the moral; and that in itself should suggest that on Hume's view aesthetic perception cannot, as on Hutcheson's, be non-epistemic. There is, indeed, a clear analogy between Hume's aesthetic theory and Hutcheson's. Like Hutcheson, Hume thinks that beauty is taken for the idea (sentiment) raised in us, and he is not disinclined, at times, to refer to a sense of beauty. And, like Hutcheson, Hume believes that there is a 'quality' in objects which is the cause of our aesthetic sentiments. But here the analogy abruptly ends; for the 'quality' Hume picks, to conform with his moral theory, pretty much closes the door right from the start on a Hutchesonian, non-epistemic theory of aesthetic perception. The 'quality', of course, is *utility*, which, in concert

with sympathy, produces the sentiment of beauty. Hume writes, in a passage that is both representative and unusually replete:

Our sense of beauty depends very much on this principle [of sympathy]; and where any object has a tendency to produce pleasure in its possessor, it is always regarded as beautiful; as every object, that has a tendency to produce pain, is disagreeable and deform'd. Thus the conveniency of a house, the fertility of a field, the strength of a horse, the capacity, security, and swift-sailing of a vessel, form the principal beauty of these several objects. Here the object which is denominated beautiful, pleases only by its tendency to produce a certain effect. The effect is the pleasure or advantage of some other person. Now the pleasure of a stranger, for whom we have no friendship, pleases us only by sympathy. To this principle, therefore, is owing the beauty, which we find in every thing that is useful. How considerable a part this is of beauty will easily appear upon reflection. Wherever an object has a tendency to produce pleasure in the possessor, or in other words, is the proper *cause* of pleasure, it is sure to please the spectator, by a delicate sympathy with the possessor. Most of the works of art are esteem'd beautiful, in proportion to their fitness for the use of man, and even many of the productions of nature derive their beauty from that source. Handsome and beautiful, on most occasions, is not an absolute but a relative quality, and pleases us by nothing but its tendency to produce an end that is agreeable.⁸

Usefulness, needless to say, is hardly well suited, as *uniformity amidst variety* might plausibly be thought to be, at least on first reflection, for an aesthetic analogue of the micro-structure of matter which, quite unknown to the perceiver, produces the sensation of redness when the fire engine goes by. For to appreciate the utility of anything, one would think, one must first come to see that it is useful; or at least come to believe so. And in any case, whether or not usefulness can function as *uniformity amidst variety* might seem to do, in a non-epistemic, causal theory of aesthetic perception, it certainly does not seem to so function in Hume's account. For Hume, it appears to me, makes it very plain that we come to know, in a quite conscious and calculating way, that things are useful, or have parts well adapted to their ends, as a necessary prologue to the arousal of the sentiment of beauty. Thus: 'A fertile soil, and a happy climate, delight us by a reflexion on the happiness which they wou'd afford the inhabitants, tho' at present the country be desart and uninhabited.'⁹ Or again: In 'Most kinds of beauty . . . tho' our first object [of perception] be some senseless inanimate piece of matter, 'tis seldom we rest here, and carry not our view to its influence on sensible and rational creatures.'¹⁰ Or, finally: 'In judging of the beauty of animal bodies, we always carry in our eye the oeconomy of a certain species; and where the limbs and features observe that proportion, which is common to the species, we pronounce them handsome and beautiful.'¹¹ In all of these passages, and many more I could have quoted from the *Treatise*, Hume not only resolves the cause of the sentiment of beauty into the useful, and the pleasure it would provide its owner, but makes it quite clear, I think, that utility functions not as the

unconscious, unknown cause of the sentiment; rather, that we must, one way or another, come to know that the object in question is useful, and (therefore) pleasure-giving, for the sentiment to be aroused. It is in this sense that Hume's theory of aesthetic perception, under the influence of his moral theory, is heavily epistemic, and quite unlike Hutcheson's in that respect.

Here I must pause, all too briefly, I am afraid, to make three important points, the last of which will take me to the concluding section of my paper.

The first point is this. Clearly, Hume means to show, in Book III of the *Treatise* (and in the second *Enquiry* as well), that morals and aesthetics have the same principle of *utility* in common. But, at least as it seems to me now, the principle functions in crucially different ways in those two areas. In morals it is, so to say, the principle of last resort. The curious observer of Hume's amorous activities need not have any beliefs at all about the usefulness of the virtue of chastity to decide that Hume's attentions to the lady are moral, or immoral (as the case may be). Beliefs about their relationship to one another, and various other background beliefs, are all that is required. It is only when the philosopher comes along to explain and defend the whole system of morality, or law, or the natural virtues, and their motivating principles, that appeal to utility need be made. But in our perception of the beautiful, if I read Hume correctly here, where utility is relevant at all—which is most of the time, apparently—it must figure, as it does not in morals, on the everyday, case by case level.

This brings me to my second point. How wide a swath does the principle of utility cut in our perceptions of beauty and deformity? Certainly Hume thought it was considerable, although the qualifying adjectives vary from passage to passage. But he insisted, both in the *Treatise* and in the second *Enquiry*, that there was another source of the sentiment of beauty as well. Thus he writes in the *Treatise* that 'the beauty of all visible objects causes a pleasure pretty much the same, tho' it be sometimes deriv'd from the mere *species* and appearance of the objects; sometimes from sympathy, and an idea of their utility.'¹² This immediate pleasure we may take in the appearance of an object, apart from its utility, seems to be more of a non-epistemic kind of perception, a vestige of Hutcheson's theory that, as we shall see; Hume never quite divested himself of.

Another vestige of Hutcheson—and this is my third and transitional point about the *Treatise*—is the almost total lack of interest on Hume's part in works of art. Where he discusses beauty in the *Treatise*, it is almost without exception the beauty of nature: fields, horses, human beings. And where works of 'art' are referred to, as in one of the passages quoted above, 'it is 'artefacts' that Hume means: houses and ships, not poems and pictures. The *Treatise* is almost bereft of reference to works of the fine arts.

III

What turned Hume's thinking to taste and the arts of the imagination? I do not know. But the *turning point* is clear: it is the *Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*. Here, as in Book III of the *Treatise*, discussion of beauty serves either to clarify some point in moral theory, or to indicate how what Hume is saying about it can, *pari passu*, be applied to aesthetics. But what is quite markedly different is that whereas in the earlier place examples of natural beauty and useful artefacts predominate, in the later work it is just the other way around: it is the fine arts that provide most of Hume's examples of the beautiful. Indeed, Hume has come to believe, apparently, that it is art, not nature, that best exemplifies the epistemic in aesthetic perception; and since moral perception cannot help but be that, it is the perception of the fine arts that now serves Hume's purposes in explicating the nature of moral perception.

One passage at the very outset of the second *Enquiry* brings out all of this in bold relief, and is worth quoting at a little length. Hume writes:

The final sentence, it is probable, which pronounces characters and actions amiable or odious, praise-worthy or blameable; that which stamps on them the mark of honour or infamy, approbation or censure; that which renders morality an active principle and constitutes virtue our happiness, and vice our misery: it is probable, I say, that this final sentence depends on some internal sense or feeling, which nature has made universal in the whole species. For what else can have an influence of this nature? But in order to pave the way for such a sentiment, and give a proper discernment of its object, it is often necessary, we find, that much reasoning should precede, that nice distinctions be made, just conclusions drawn, distant comparisons formed, complicated relations examined, and general facts fixed and ascertained. Some species of beauty, especially the natural kinds, on their first appearance, command our affection and approbation; and where they fail of this effect, it is impossible for any reasoning to redress their influence, or adapt them better to our taste and sentiment. But in many orders of beauty, particularly those of the finer arts, it is requisite to employ much reasoning, in order to feel the proper sentiment; and a false relish may frequently be corrected by argument and reflection. There are just grounds to conclude that moral beauty partakes much of this latter species, and demands the assistance of our intellectual faculties, in order to give it a suitable influence on the human mind.¹³

This passage, I believe, reveals in a quite obvious way the direction which Hume's thinking about aesthetics had taken from the *Treatise* to the second *Enquiry*. Hutcheson's non-epistemic, causal theory of aesthetic perception was, it would seem, never a real option for Hume. For, under the influence of his own moral theory, which had dictated the substitution of *utility* for *uniformity amidst variety*, the aesthetic was, right from the start, an epistemic one. What remained of Hutcheson, besides the general outline, was the preoccupation with natural beauty and the useful arts. But in formulating a basically epistemic account of aesthetic perception, Hume had laid the necessary groundwork for a critique of the arts of taste.

Hutcheson, with his unabashed non-epistemic aesthetic, could deal nicely with the beauty of triangles and pebbles, but could do little with Horace and Homer. Hume put thought back into the aesthetic of sentiment, thus paving the way for his future preoccupation with poems rather than pebbles. The passage in hand seems to represent the stage in Hume's thought about these matters where he came to realize that an epistemic theory of aesthetic perception not only makes the fine arts the paradigm instances of beauty, but, as Kant would put it, makes them susceptible of a critique. That critique Hume soon provided in his elegant dissertation, 'Of the Standard of Taste'.

I have written, at various times, on various aspects of this deceptively simple work.¹⁴ I have no desire to rehearse those remarks here; nor is this the place to attempt a thorough analysis of Hume's only extended venture into aesthetics and the philosophy of art. What is appropriate is to carry my theme of a developing epistemic theory of aesthetic perception through its final phase in Hume's thought. I can only do this briefly and sketchily—a more ambitious effort in this regard must be postponed for another occasion.

Hume saw the problem of taste much as Kant was to see it some years later, as the resolution of a dilemma which had, on one of its horns, the commonsensical notion that about taste there is no disputing, and on the other the (to Hume) equally self-evident precept that, as he put it, 'where objects so disproportioned are compared together', for example, Milton's poetry and Ogilby's, 'The principle of the natural equality of tastes is then totally forgot . . .'.¹⁵

Since each individual's judgement of any given work of art is a matter of 'sentiment', that is to say 'emotion' rather than 'thought', the resolution of the 'antinomy' of taste, for Hume, becomes an affair of reducing matters of sentiment to matters of 'fact'; for if there were no 'facts' to adjudicate, on which we all could at least potentially agree, the 'principle of the natural equality of tastes', i.e., *de gustibus non disputandum est*, must remain unchallenged. The 'facts' which Hume settled on, for reasons that I will not go into here, were, naturally enough, facts about whose sentiments were to be trusted in matters of critical judgement.¹⁶ The problem of what are the good works of art became, then, the problem of who are the good critics; and although the latter was not, Hume recognized, an easy question to answer, it was, 'if we consider the matter aright', a question 'of fact, not of sentiment',¹⁷ so in principle, if not always in practice, a question possible to answer.

Hume thought that there were five infirmities under which 'the generality of men labour . . .' in their aesthetic judgements, and five corresponding perfections characterizing 'a true judge in the finer arts': he concluded that '*strong sense*, united to *delicate sentiment*, improved by *prac-*

tice, perfected by *comparison*, and cleared of all *prejudice*, can alone entitle critics to this valuable character; and the joint verdict of such, wherever they are to be found, is the true standard of taste and beauty.'¹⁸ It is here that I want to take up the tale anew, and examine, in the light of the distinction between epistemic and non-epistemic theories of aesthetic perception, the characteristics of the 'true judge' which Hume has enumerated.

It will be apparent even on casual inspection that Hume's characteristics immediately divide themselves into two groups: 'faculties' and 'conditions' which develop or render them optimal. The faculties are *good* (or *strong*) *sense* and *delicacy of sentiment* (or *taste*), the conditions which improve, develop, or render them optimally functional, *practice* in making judgments of taste, *comparisons* of the objects of taste with one another, and an *unprejudiced* frame of mind overall. I shall have nothing to say here about *practice* and use of *comparisons*, as they are obvious enough to require no extended examination. Rather, I would like to concentrate on the faculties of taste, particularly, *good sense*, and, secondarily, on lack of *prejudice*—a far more subtle and wide-ranging concept than its name might suggest.

Let me suggest, to start with, that the existence of *two* faculties of taste in Hume's dissertation still reflects the distinction already explicit in the *Treatise*, and never quite given up, between an epistemic and a non-epistemic kind of aesthetic perception, *delicacy of taste* embodying the non-epistemic kind, with close affinities to Hutcheson's sense of beauty, *good sense* suggesting, on the other hand, the rational making out of ends and means, purposes and functions, that so clearly characterizes the dominant strain in Hume's aesthetic theory, as outlined here and there in the *Treatise*, second *Enquiry*, and elsewhere.

If, however, *good sense* plays the leading *epistemic* role in Hume's dissertation, it is vital, for present purposes, to argue that it is the hero of the piece as well. It would hardly be a favourable indication for an epistemic account of Hume's aesthetic theory that the major epistemic faculty of taste was only a bit player. Unfortunately, Hume introduces the faculty of *good sense* in a way that at least on a cursory reading is not altogether favourable to such an interpretation, and, indeed, seems to suggest that of the two faculties, *delicacy of taste* is the more important. He writes of *good sense* that 'if not an essential part of taste, [it] is at least requisite to the operations of this latter faculty',¹⁹ the 'if' clause clearly implying that it is *not* essential. *Good sense*, it would seem, is not, then, a necessary condition for the possession of taste.

I believe this is a correct reading of Hume. But if properly understood, it needn't imply, except in a harmless way, that *good sense* is a less important faculty than *delicacy*, or that it does not play the major role in Hume's theory of taste which an epistemic interpretation of Hume requires.

Imagine a person who lacked *good sense* but not *delicacy*. Such a person would indeed possess *taste*, but only a most primitive, childlike version of it. He would, one supposes, derive pleasure from simple patterns, coloured pebbles, seashells, Hutcheson's geometrical shapes (which figure so prominently in his work as examples of *uniformity amidst variety*), and, perhaps, the most trivial literary works, folk songs, and pictures. But anything like mature, not to say exalted, taste would be quite beyond him. *That* requires *good sense*, because the objects of such taste are meritorious just on account of their purposes, and the subtle functional relations of their parts to one another: i.e., all of those properties that require epistemic perception.

In all the nobler productions of genius, there is a mutual relation and correspondence of parts; nor can either the beauties or blemishes be perceived by him whose thought is not capacious enough to comprehend all those parts, and compare them with each other, in order to perceive the consistence and uniformity of the whole. Every work of art has also a certain end or purpose for which it is calculated; and is to be deemed more or less perfect, as it is more or less fitted to attain this end.²⁰

Consider, on the other hand, a person who lacked *delicacy* but not *good sense*. Such a person would indeed be able to perceive all of those qualities of function and purpose that on Hume's view constitute the merit of great literary works (and perhaps all other works of art as well). What he would lack would be any perception of their *beauty*. He would, I suggest, lack the faculty from which the *sentiment* of beauty issues. And since the sentiment is what really constitutes a purposive or functional property something beyond merely purposive or functional, that is to say, *beautiful*, a person who could not have that sentiment aroused in him would be *completely* without taste, for all his ability to discern those properties in the exalted objects of taste which exalt them.

We can now see why *delicacy* but not *good sense* is a necessary condition for taste; and why, nevertheless, *good sense* might still be the dominant faculty. For *delicacy* is a necessary condition of having any taste at all; but without *good sense*, it is the taste of a child or a rustic that *delicacy* provides: simply the bare minimum. It is *good sense* that provides taste with its epistemic component, and thus the wherewithal to perceive all that is cultivated, sophisticated, in a word, civilized in its objects. That Hume describes *good sense*, then, as 'not an essential part of taste . . .' hardly implies that he has relegated it to a minor role. It *could* still be in the forefront. But is it?

Hume, I think, leaves us in no real doubt that *good sense* is the principle on which most of the weight of his aesthetic theory rests. For if it is not a *sine qua non* for taste *simpliciter* (and it is not), it is, surely, a *sine qua non* of the good critic, the 'true judge' on whose sentiment the standard of taste is formed, and a *sine qua non* for the appreciation of all of those objects of

taste that really mattered in Hume's world: in other words, it is a *sine qua non* for good taste. 'Where good sense is wanting,' Hume writes, 'he [i.e., the would-be true judge] is not qualified to discern the beauties of design and reasoning, *which are the highest and most excellent*.'²¹ It is *good sense*, then, that transforms Hutcheson's sense of beauty, with its simple geometrical objects, into the full-blooded taste of a cultivated man of the Enlightenment, whose idea of immaturity in such matters seems to have been a predilection for Ovid over Horace or Tacitus past the age of forty.²²

Can we say any more about *good sense* and its objects? A great deal, I would think, in a more extended account of Hume's dissertation. For the nonce, however, I will content myself with two further observations which will help, perhaps, to put this faculty and its objects into slightly better focus, and also serve to place them in a more understandable relation to Hume's philosophical development from the *Treatise* to 'Of the Standard of Taste'.

My first observation has to do with the relationship of *good sense* to the condition Hume calls, somewhat narrowly, lack of prejudice. Hume thought that the relationship was a specially direct one. Indeed, the introduction of *good sense* into his argument occurs immediately after the account of *prejudice*, and is meant to show how lack of *prejudice* is to be achieved.

It is well known, that, in all questions submitted to the understanding, prejudice is destructive of sound judgment, and perverts all operations of the intellectual faculties: it is no less contrary to good taste; nor has it less influence to corrupt our sentiment of beauty. It belongs to *good sense* to check its influence in both cases . . .²³

What is lack of *prejudice*? It is, in its simplest form, just that: to be unbiased and thus not to judge too favourably of a work whose author you like or too unfavourably of one whose author you detest. But it is more than that, which is why, I think, it is somewhat misleading for Hume to introduce *good sense* as the necessary condition of lack of *prejudice*; rather, the relation is reciprocal.

What, then, is the deeper sense of lack of *prejudice*? It is akin, I would suggest, both to what has been called the 'disinterested spectator' in Hume's (and others') moral theory, and what a later age called, in aesthetic theory, the 'attitude of aesthetic disinterestedness' (though, needless to say, these concepts employ *related*, not *identical* senses of 'disinterestedness'). In general, Hume supposes the author of any given work has a purpose for that work in mind, and a particular audience to which the means of attaining that purpose must be finely adjusted. The character of that audience and, therefore, the means the author must employ to attain the end of his work, are determined by two variables: the period in which the author

and audience flourished, and their country or geographical region. And if, as will frequently be the case, a reader of the text (or, we may add, the observer of a painting and, perhaps, the auditor of a score, if Hume thought music one of the fine arts) happens to be of a different age, or different region from the author and audience, or both, he must make some imaginative adjustment in the form of an effort to put himself in the place of that audience and author, temporally and geographically.

We may observe, that every work of art, in order to produce its due effect on the mind, must be surveyed in a certain point of view, and cannot be fully relished by persons whose situation, real or imaginary, is not conformable to that which is required by the performance. An orator addresses himself to a particular audience, and must have a regard to their particular genius, interests, opinions, passions, and prejudices; otherwise he hopes in vain to govern their resolutions, and inflame their affections A critic of a different age or nation, who should peruse this discourse, must have all these circumstances in his eye, and must place himself in the same situation as the audience, in order to form a true judgment of the oration.²⁴

We are now in a better position, I think, to see what sort of thing a work of art is, for Hume, or, to put it another way, what sort of artistic properties are the critically relevant ones. A work of art has a purpose, the artist's end in view relative to an audience of some specific time and place. And it consists of parts with complex functional relations to one another which (one must suppose) are designed to achieve the overall end or purpose of the work. Because, of course, these intermediate functional properties, as well as the overarching purpose of the work, were adjusted by the artist to a particular audience, we cannot perceive them properly without either *being* that audience, or, failing that, as most of the world must, trying, by imaginative projection to put ourselves in that audience's place. But the point to underscore, for present purposes, is that the properties we so laboriously make out, *are* functional ones: ends and purposes of works of art and their parts.

This brings me to my second, and final, remark. Hume began, in the *Treatise*, as we have seen, with an epistemic theory of aesthetic perception more or less informed by his moral views. An integral part of it was the contention, at least as old as the *Greater Hippias*,²⁵ that beauty lies in utility. Not surprisingly, the examples of beauty that Hume adduced in the *Treatise* were, for the most part, natural objects useful to men, and functional artefacts.

In the second *Enquiry* Hume's examples of the beautiful were of quite another stripe, being here drawn largely from art works. But we can now see that his basic principles, an epistemic aesthetic perception, with utility as its object, were adhered to to the last. For in 'Of the Standard of Taste' he gives us at least the bare bones of a theory of art works as functional objects with functional parts, consistent with the notion of beauty as utility

made out in the *Treatise*, and demanding, as well, an epistemic perceptual apparatus.

It should be a source of deep regret to philosophers of art that Hume never worked these intriguing beginnings (as I think he might have done) into a more elaborate philosophical system. For although I think the attempt to conceive of works of art solely in functional terms must fail, the power of Hume's mind, even employed in the service of a hopeless cause, would have given the young discipline of 'aesthetics' the firm philosophical footing it required in the English-speaking world, something we have only just now belatedly achieved, some two hundred years later. But Hume only did what he did; and we should at least be grateful for that.²⁶

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- ¹⁴ *The Seventh Sense*, Chapter VIII; 'Hume's Standard of Taste: Breaking the Circle', *British Journal of Aesthetics*, 7 (1967); 'A Logic of Taste—The First Fifty Years', *Aesthetics: A Critical Anthology*, ed. George Dickie and Richard Sclafani (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1977).
- ¹⁵ David Hume, 'Of the Standard of Taste', *Essays Moral, Political and Literary* (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), p. 235.
- ¹⁶ On this see, 'A Logic of Taste—The First Fifty Years'.
- ¹⁷ 'Of the Standard of Taste', pp. 247–248.
- ¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 247; italics mine.
- ¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 245.
- ²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 245–246.
- ²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 247; italics mine.
- ²² *Ibid.*, p. 250.
- ²³ *Ibid.*, p. 245.
- ²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 244–245.
- ²⁵ For example: 'the useful we call beautiful, and beautiful in the way in which it is useful, and for the purpose for which it is useful, and at the time when it is useful; and that which is in all these aspects useless we say is ugly.' Plato, *The Greater Hippias*, trans. H. N. Fowler (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, The Loeb Classical Library, 1953), p. 389 (295D).
- ²⁶ The present paper is a revised and expanded version of one presented to the Tenth Hume Conference, Trinity College, Dublin, 26 August, 1981. I am grateful to the audience for many useful questions and comments, and, particularly, to my co-symposiasts, Peter Jones and James King. I am also indebted to T. J. Diffey for substantial improvements in the text.

MOTION AND EMOTION IN MUSIC: HOW MUSIC SOUNDS

Malcolm Budd

1. IN *The Meaning of Music* Carroll C. Pratt attempted to answer a familiar problem that he posed in the following way.¹ Let us say that what a person experiences as outside his body is for that person objective and that what he experiences as belonging to or inside his body is for him subjective. By this criterion moods and emotions are subjective for the person who feels them: what someone feels when he feels worry, anxiety, uneasiness, fear and joy belongs to or lies within his body. An emotion is subjective in the sense that what is felt is located within, rather than outside, the subject's body. When a person experiences an emotion he feels the contraction of his brow, the tension of his muscles, the pounding of his blood, or some other happenings in or to his body. But moods and emotions are sometimes spoken of as though it were thought that they could be properties of phenomena that are for each person objective—in particular, as though they could be properties of music. Yet it cannot be literally true that music embodies emotion, for it is not a living body which feels its own bodily processes. How, then, are we to understand the characterization of music as agitated, calm, wistful, seductive, restless, pompous, passionate, sombre, triumphant or yearning?

The main theory that Pratt was concerned to present an alternative to was the theory that these are merely moods or feelings which the listener has erroneously transferred from himself to the music because he has become a victim of the pathetic fallacy. Ruskin believed that our emotions can induce a falsity in our experience of the external world.² Physical objects can assume false appearances under the influence of violent emotion, so that we impute characteristics to such objects that really they lack. We attribute to inanimate objects characteristics that are specific to living things and we credit to other kinds of living things qualities that only human beings possess. Although we know that non-human creatures lack specifically human characteristics and that inanimate objects are not forms of life, the emotions have the power to make it appear to us otherwise: these objects can then seem to be qualified by properties that they are incapable of possessing. The excited state of our feelings makes us for the time irrational. With our reason temporarily unhinged, we imagine the objects we perceive to have characteristics which we know they cannot

have. Ruskin gave the name 'the pathetic fallacy' to this falseness in our impressions of external things induced by strong emotion.

If someone who listens to music is so powerfully affected by the music that he comes to think of it as animate and to perceive it as something which is in an emotional state then this falseness in his consciousness is an instance of the pathetic fallacy: the strength of his feelings has led him to project the emotion that he feels into the music. However, if the fact is that music arouses emotions in the listener it is hard to see how he could be genuinely under the impression that the subject of the emotions he feels is the music and not himself. An illusion which involves the mislocation of an emotion's subject in an inanimate thing is not something that recommends itself on independent grounds. Furthermore, if the description of music in emotive terms is the commission of the pathetic fallacy then such description is always unwarranted: a character has been wrongly transferred from the listener to the music. But the description of music as joyful, sad or triumphant is not always inappropriate.

Perhaps, then, the emotive description of music is merely a fanciful manner of speaking in which the emotion apparently attributed to the music should be understood as felt by the listener, so that what the listener means by what he says may be true even though he expresses himself in a misleading manner. But this suggestion is little better than the previous one; for although it does not require the listener to experience violent emotion which unhinges his reason, it does require him to feel the emotion that seemingly he attributes to the music. And yet it is unnecessary for someone to feel triumph, sadness or joy if he is properly to characterize music by the names for these emotions.

How, then, is the ostensible attribution of moods and emotions to music to be understood?

2. Pratt's solution to this problem is in outline as follows. There are movements both of and in the body: our body can move about and it is itself a locus of movements. Some of these movements we feel by kinaesthesia and organic sensation. The fact that we can feel bodily movement kinaesthetically and organically is what is chiefly responsible for the many words which, when used to describe how we feel, signify the dynamic character of movement. The words 'forceful', 'weak', 'languid', 'agitated', 'restless', 'calm', 'excited', 'quiet', 'indecisive', 'graceful', 'awkward', 'clumsy', 'tripping', 'rhythmic' and 'fluent', for example, can appropriately be used to characterize how we feel.³ But these words apply equally to qualities of the bodily movements we experience. Therefore, if there is another species of movement that possesses these same characteristics of felt bodily movement these words can be applied equally accurately to this other species of movement. In consequence there will be no pathetic fallacy involved in such a use of the words. And in fact musical movement

possesses characteristics of the required kind. Hence, such a sentence as 'The music is anguished' is, when true, literally true.

3. However, the notion of musical movement is problematic. For although we use the language of movement in talking about music it is shorn of an essential implication. If I throw a ball into the air, as it gets higher it moves from one position to another. But if a note is succeeded by a higher note there is nothing that in fact moves from one position through an intervening gap to a higher position.⁴ Furthermore, nothing even seems to move from one position to another: my perception of a higher note following a lower note is not *as of* movement in the sense that the perception of a wave moving across the sea is the perception as of something moving across the sea, or in the sense in which the experience of the motion picture is the experience as of motion.

4. Before proceeding further with the topic of movement in music there is a prior matter that needs attention. For movement requires not only something that moves but also positions between which movement takes place. Does the temporal art of music have a spatial or quasi-spatial aspect of the required kind? The obvious candidate for the role of position in 'musical space' is pitch level. There must be a good reason why the standard way of referring to differences in the pitch of tones is by means of words which refer to relative position in space; and if this reason is made explicit it may allow us properly to regard pitch levels on the model of spatial positions.

A common view is that when the terms 'high' and 'low' are applied to tones they are used metaphorically and spatial metaphors are used to describe differences of pitch because by certain associations differences of pitch remind people of differences of height. Pratt, on the contrary, maintains that prior to any association each tone has 'an intrinsic spatial characteristic'. Of course, his claim is not that it is literally true of two sounds of different pitch that one is higher than the other in the sense that it comes from a higher position in space. His view is more nearly that it is literally true that one of the tones seems to come—it is heard as if it were coming—from a higher position in space: it is *phenomenologically* higher in space. But it is clearly not unrestrictedly true that 'high tones are phenomenologically higher in space than low ones'. For a low note can be heard as coming from above us while at the same time a high note is heard as coming from below us. When a higher note does in fact come from a lower position in space than a lower note it can seem to be coming from below the lower note. The view licensed by the experiments Pratt bases his claim upon is that if two sounds in fact come from the same position the sound that is heard as higher in pitch is heard to come from a higher position in space. A high tone seems to come from a higher position than a low tone when the tones are emitted from the same point in space. Pratt's

claim is that it is this fact that explains (and perhaps is signalled by) our calling one tone higher than another when it has the greater frequency.

Now whilst it is true that a musical instrument usually emits both high and low notes from the same place, so that in listening to a musical instrument the condition under which (according to Pratt) high notes are heard as coming from a higher position is characteristically satisfied, it is not in fact integral to the experience of different notes that they should be heard as if they were coming from different heights. It is not necessary to suffer the *illusion* that low notes are coming from a lower position than high notes in order to hear notes as higher or lower. The perception of forms in music also does not require that different notes should seem as if they were coming from different heights. For example, if the lower notes that compose a melody are both actually and manifestly produced at a higher position than higher notes—the phenomenological position in space of lower notes is their real position and this position is higher than that of higher notes—nevertheless we can hear the notes as composing that melody.

Pratt's thesis that high notes sound as if they come from a higher spatial position than low notes is not important in describing the experience of music. Furthermore, it fails to explain how difference of pitch is itself experienced. Pratt claims that *in addition* to hearing a difference in pitch between different notes we hear high notes as if they were coming from a higher position in space than lower notes and, in virtue of this fact, we describe difference in pitch with spatial terms.⁵ This leaves uncharacterized the experience of hearing difference in pitch itself. But the nature of this experience is something that can and should be described. For an understanding of the physical basis of difference in pitch no more provides an account of the experience of pitch than an understanding of the physical basis of difference of timbre provides an account of the experience of timbre. Just as timbre is not heard as a multiplicity of tones—although difference in timbre is a function of the number and relative intensities of overtones—so pitch is not heard as rate of vibration or frequency of pendular motion.

A better view, which involves a characterization of the experience of pitch itself, was put forward by Edmund Gurney:

among the simple impressions of sense, differences of pitch present the absolutely unique peculiarity, that they are neither differences of *kind*, as between red and blue colours, or between bitter and sweet tastes, or between a violin-note and a clarinet-note; nor differences of *strength* or *degree of intensity*, as between bright and moderate light, or between very sweet and slightly sweet tastes, or between a loud note and a soft note; but they are differences of *distance and direction*, clearly and indisputably felt as such . . .⁶

Gurney attempts to bring out this peculiarity of pitch by contrasting our

experience of the scale of pitch with our experience of the colour spectrum:

When a spectrum is thrown on a screen, the distances from each other of the various colours give no feeling of cogency or necessity. Presented as they are, the space-distance of any tint from any other could of course be mechanically measured for any particular adjustment of the screen and the prism: but such measurements would have no general or essential validity; by imagining the spectrum indefinitely lengthened or contracted at any point we can vary indefinitely the relative distances of the colours, so that distance in space is clearly quite irrelevant to their differences. The *order* of the spectrum, moreover, is, as far as our sensations go, perfectly accidental and arbitrary; we can construct or imagine other orders, presenting just as much, or rather just as little cogency, and whose gradation would look just as natural; for instance, we might make blue shade into red *via* purple. Again, if a bright spot of yellow (the middle colour of the spectrum) be thrown on a screen, and, by the gradual intervention of coloured glasses between it and the source of light, the colour be gradually changed to *red*, and a similar process be repeated so as to change the spot from yellow to *green*, we have absolutely no sense of having passed in *opposite directions* in the two cases; nor have we any sense of *going further* in looking from the leaves to the flower of a scarlet geranium than in looking from the leaves to the flower of a buttercup: whereas if we hear first a middle note on a piano followed by a bass note, and then a middle note followed by a treble note, the impression of opposite directions is irresistible; as is the impression of going further in the passage from a bass note to a treble note, as compared with the passage from a bass note to a middle note.⁷

It is clear, as Gurney here demonstrates, that difference in pitch is not experienced as difference merely in kind or quality, as between different hues.⁸ But neither is it experienced as difference in strength or degree of intensity. For when a phenomenon exhibits degrees of intensity of a quality in the manner of sweetness, the difference between the instances of the phenomenon is experienced as more or less of that quality. An ordering of instances along a 'dimension' is effected by the degree of the quality that the instances are experienced to possess. The ordering just is the relative values of the degree of the quality. But sounds of different pitch are not heard as having different degrees of some quality, in accordance with which they can be ordered along a scale. As far as is true of our experience, there is no less and no more of the phenomenon in a note of low pitch than there is in a note of higher pitch. This is clear also from the fact that when there is an intensive 'continuum' in the manner of sweetness there is the possibility that the degree of intensity of the quality should be zero. Tastes can be more or less sweet or they can be lacking in sweetness altogether. But as we proceed in either direction along the scale of pitch, although we come to positions where we cannot proceed further—we cannot hear notes of higher and higher pitch or notes of lower and lower pitch—the limits of our hearing of pitch are not points at which the degree of intensity of a phenomenon (pitch) is experienced as having become zero. Neither as we ascend nor as we descend the scale does the phenome-

non of pitch approach a point at which there is no longer any amount of it left.

The sense in which differences of pitch are differences of 'distance and direction' is therefore that sounds of different pitch are experienced as ordered along a scale and the ordering is not determined by a quality's being experienced to different degrees: the sounds are experienced as ordered without the order being produced by the varying strength of some feature heard in the sounds. And it is in this sense that pitch levels can be said to provide 'positions' in musical 'space': they are the musical analogues for musical 'space' of points in real space. But it must be remembered that this is nothing more than an analogy, the limited basis of which I have attempted to make clear.⁹

5. We can now return to Pratt's treatment of the idea of movement in music. We have seen that differences in pitch are experienced as differences of 'distance and direction'; and the two directions that the scale of pitch presents are usually characterized as 'up' and 'down'.¹⁰ But when one note is followed by another note do we always experience the succession merely as a tone at one position of the scale followed by a tone at a higher or lower position? Isn't it sometimes the case that we hear movement within the 'dimension' that pitch provides, so that a later note is heard as the end of an upward or downward movement? Pratt, like many others, took seriously the fact that terminology denoting movement is used to describe music. Moreover, his account of the correct understanding of the description of music by means of terms that stand for emotions and moods requires a notion of musical movement that does not diverge radically from the notion of movement in space. Yet the idea of movement that can be heard in music is problematic, as we have seen, because not only is there nothing that moves from the position of one note to the position of a succeeding note but there is not even the appearance or illusion of something that moves between the positions.

Pratt hoped to resolve the problem by indicating a parallel between, on the one hand, some of the processes we hear in music and, on the other hand, our perception of movement by sight and kinaesthesia. Physical movement is change of spatial location. If we consider a simple case of translational movement then we perceive movement by sight by virtue of the fact that our visual field successively contains similar visual qualities at different positions. When a musical instrument follows one note with a note of a different pitch we hear, one after the other, similar sounds at different pitch levels. Now if we accept Pratt's thesis about the experience of pitch then our hearing of pitch involves, phenomenologically, the experience of a spatial dimension.¹¹ Therefore, when a musical instrument plays successively notes of different pitch our auditory field contains successively similar auditory qualities at different positions. This parallel

between the experience of a series of notes of different pitch and the perception of movement by sight is sufficient, Pratt claims, to ground the attribution to music of characteristics of movement. Music can contain processes which possess properties that are similar to those that other kinds of movement, or movement properly so-called, can possess. In particular, musical 'movement' is capable of embodying counterparts of the forms and patterns of bodily movement. Musical movement—which is objective—possesses properties very similar to those of bodily movement—which is subjective (for the person whose body it is). The close likeness between the features of the two kinds of movement licenses the univocal application to them of words that stand for these characteristics.

But it is clear that Pratt's attempted resolution of the problem of movement heard in music fails. In the first place, it is wrong to represent the experience of forms of movement in music as a perceptual illusion;¹² and yet this is all that the likening of the experience of musical sounds to the visual and kinaesthetic perception of movement could result in. In any case, the experience of a series of notes of different pitch does not involve the experience of a siren-like continuous alteration in the pitch of a sound, whereas when an object moves across our field of view our experience involves a continuous change in the position of the appearance of the object.¹³ Secondly, it is not always true that we hear a succession of notes of different pitch (but of similar timbre) as an upwards and downward movement. But Pratt's explanation of the phenomenon of musical movement implies that we should hear each such succession as a movement. Thirdly, Pratt's explanation cannot account for the possibility of counterpoint: we can hear two melodies proceeding together even when the melodies are produced by instruments with the same or similar timbre. But the manifest discontinuity of the change in pitch of successive notes disallows the modelling of the experience of counterpoint on the visual perception of two concurrent movements.

Perhaps the comparison between the experience of music and the perception of movement was not intended to imply that the experience of music involves the illusion of movement but only that it resembles the perception of movement in the respect that it involves the change of the position of sensory quality. Even so, the last two objections would apply with equal force: the experience of movement in music would not be accounted for. A resemblance between the experience of a series of notes of different pitch and the perception of movement is too general a phenomenon to explain the particular ways in which ideas of movement occur in the description of music.

It is clear that when the concept of movement is applied to music, music is not brought under the concept in the same manner in which an object

that is thought of as moving is subsumed under the concept. The experience of movement in music is not a form of perceptual illusion (nor some close relative of illusion which likewise involves the thought that what is perceived is moving). How, then, should the description of music by means of words that signify movement be understood? There are two obvious possibilities. The first declines to take the talk of movement seriously and maintains that 'when we speak of an ascending phrase all we mean is that later notes of the phrase increase in pitch. The second construes as metaphorical the description of music in terms that stand for forms of movement. Clearly, it is only the second interpretation that assigns to the concept of movement a significant role in the experience and description of music. But the role it assigns is obscure. For the function of metaphor is manifold and unless the underlying point of a metaphor is understood its characterization as a metaphor is unrevealing. Furthermore, to characterize as metaphorical the description of music in terms that stand for movement is not to describe the experience of hearing movement in music. For the experience of hearing movement in music is the experience that is expressed by the description of music in terms which signify movement; and since the characterization of the description as metaphorical fails to illuminate the description it likewise fails to illuminate the experience.

6. The close parallel Pratt purported to find between so-called 'movement' in music and real movement does not exist. But it is unclear how damaging this is to his suggestion as to how the apparent attribution to music of subjective characteristics should be understood. For although the suggestion seeks to exploit the supposed parallel it is uncertain that it requires that music is, or is experienced as, a form of movement: it may require no more than that music can possess various features of forms of movement. It is therefore necessary to consider in more detail the account Pratt presents of the use of emotion terms to describe music.

The account is based upon the proposition that emotions and moods are subjective experiences: when we experience an emotion or are subject to a mood what we feel (organically or kinaesthetically) are processes which involve movements of or within our body. Now if a movement, or an inclination to movement, is involved in a certain psychological state there will be a character, *C*, of the movement which we feel when we are in that state. And it might be that we are said to feel *C* when we are in that psychological state precisely because this is just what we feel when we are in that state. But this character might be shared by a piece of music—in which case the music could properly be characterized as *C*. And the characterization of the music as *C* would not be figurative but literal. It would not depend for its force upon the primary application of the term 'C' to a psychological state. Rather, the psychological state would derive its name from a quality of movement which is common to bodily and

musical movement. We would both be and feel C; the music would not feel C, but merely be C. It is precisely this kind of possibility that Pratt proposes as the correct understanding of the use of emotion terms to describe music.

Pratt presents a number of psychological states which are supposed to be illustrative of his account. One is the state of agitation. When someone is in an agitated state he is liable to behave agitatedly; and if he does behave agitatedly he feels the agitated movements that his body makes. But the agitated character of these movements can be shared by many other kinds of phenomena, and in particular by music. And if a piece of music has this agitated character then its description as agitated is literally true. Another state is restlessness. If someone feels restless he does not feel at rest. He feels such things as an inability to keep still and an increased rate of breathing and heartbeat. Much the same kinds or aspects of movement can be found in music:

Staccato passages, trills, strong accents, quavers, rapid *accelerandos* and *crescendos*, shakes, wide jumps in pitch—all such devices conduce to the creation of an auditory structure which is appropriately described as restless.¹⁴

A third illustration is provided by the state of vacillation. Pratt maintains that the reason musical phrases can contain movements which possess the character of indecision and vacillation is that they can have the same character as a bodily movement which is part of a subjective state that is appropriately described as indecisive and vacillating.¹⁵ Finally, Pratt claims that most of the words 'playful', 'whimsical', 'triumphant', 'powerful', 'martial', 'majestic', 'calm', 'peaceful', 'hurrying', 'struggling', 'bewildering', 'tumultuous', 'uncertain' and 'suspense' can be used for emotions and moods; and when they are so used they

stand for psychological experiences which include among their components various forms of movement. In so far as similar forms of movement may be presented tonally, the same words apply equally well to musical effects.¹⁶

In short: music can be agitated, restless, triumphant or calm since it can possess the character of the bodily movements which are involved in the moods and emotions that are given these names precisely because it is this character of the bodily movements which is felt when the mood or emotion is experienced.

7. Emotion, therefore, is not really experienced as embodied in music. Its apparent embodiment is explained by two facts: that musical movements have properties very similar to characteristics of felt bodily movements, and that emotions are described by terms for these characteristics because they include movements with these characteristics and it is these movements which are felt when the emotions are experienced. There are

characteristics of musical movement that bear a close resemblance to certain features of bodily movement. These characteristics are frequently described by words which also stand for moods and emotions. But these characteristics 'merely *sound* the way moods *feel*'.¹⁷ Words that signify moods and emotions can be used to describe the auditory structures of music because the form of experiences of one sense modality can duplicate the form of experiences of another sense modality. Objective phenomenal structures can exhibit a striking resemblance to the form of subjective bodily reverberations and in consequence be thought of, erroneously, as the embodiments of emotions and moods. But they do not embody emotions and moods. Rather, 'they merely sound and look the way emotions feel'.¹⁸ Music embodies not psychological conditions but the characters of the bodily movements (the feelings of) which are included in or compose psychological conditions.

8. It is important to realize that Pratt's account is an account only of the correct interpretation of a particular form of speech: the description of what is objective (music) in terms of what is subjective (mood and emotion). The account does not specify a relation between the objective and the subjective that is supposed to be important from the point of view of music as art. The fact that a piece of music possesses a feature in common with an emotional state is not assigned an importance different from the fact that the music possesses this feature. The common possession of the property is significant only in grounding one type of description of music. The suggestion is not that it is integral to the musical value of some works of music—that it is of importance from the point of view of the value of music as music—that music should be experienced as having properties in common with the bodily processes which are felt when moods or emotions are experienced. It is necessary to appreciate the auditory structure of a musical work but not to appreciate its resemblance to a pattern of bodily movement.¹⁹

9. It is clear that whether or not this account ever correctly represents how the description of music in emotion terms should be understood it could work only for a psychological condition which is such that: (i) there is a way that a person feels when he is in the condition; (ii) this way is so characterized because there are bodily movements (the feelings of which are) 'included' in the psychological condition, the subject feels these bodily movements when he experiences the condition and they have a property which gives its name to the condition; (iii) music can share with these bodily movements the property that gives its name to the psychological condition. For the account is essentially that there are features of movement that can be perceived in two different ways: by organic and kinaesthetic feeling in the perception of bodily movement and by hearing in the perception of musical movement.

Now there are psychological conditions that more or less, or with some show of plausibility, fit the schema, and it is unsurprising that Pratt's account appears to be based upon these. Restlessness and agitation are perhaps the two examples that provide the greatest support for his account. Something is in a restless state if it is ceaselessly moving about. Someone who is restless finds it difficult to be still and he will move restlessly. He can perceive the ceaseless movement of his body by bodily feeling, in which case he feels, or he is aware of feeling, restless. And music can be in a state of ceaseless change. Again, something is in an agitated state if it is moving to and fro or shaking. Someone who is agitated will behave in an agitated fashion unless he represses his inclination; and he can feel the agitated movements that his body makes. And music can be in a state similar to agitation. But there do not appear to be many psychological conditions that satisfy the schema. Furthermore, many of the subjective states that music is said to express or whose names are used to describe music do not satisfy the schema.

The movement of an object can be characterized with respect to the number of movements that it is making, the parts of the object that are in motion, the manner, extent, speed and force of each movement and the resistance with which each movement is met. It is only psychological conditions that can be defined by a set of such features that can fit the schema. But there is no set of such features that defines the emotion of sadness, for example, in the sense that it specifies what a person feels when he feels sad and it is in virtue of this that his feeling is characterized as sadness. For sadness is a form of unhappiness, and when someone feels unhappy there is no set of features of bodily movement which gives its name to that feeling. Moreover, sadness is a specific kind of unhappiness: it is unhappiness at loss, suffering or disappointment. And the bodily movements that are indicative of unhappiness are not in themselves sufficient to determine what kind of thing the unhappiness they are signs of is about: there are no bodily movements that are specific to sadness amongst the various forms of unhappiness. Therefore, the characterization of music as sad cannot be understood in accordance with the model that Pratt suggests.

It would not be an adequate reply to this argument to claim that a certain kind of bodily movement is a part, but only a part, of what someone feels when he feels sad. For even if this were true it would not be sufficient to license the attribution of sadness to music in the style Pratt advocates. If a person feels more than this kind of movement when he feels sad then—in accordance with Pratt's model—we should attribute less than the full emotional condition to music that embodies this movement. Pratt maintains that certain words, when used for emotions and moods

stand for psychological experiences which include among their components various forms of movement.

But the conclusion he draws from this does not follow:

In so far as similar forms of movement may be presented tonally, the same words apply equally well to musical effects.

If we feel F in experiencing E, and C is a component of E (or is a part of what we feel when we experience E), but C is not identical with F and C does not imply F, then if we are to comply with Pratt's account we cannot properly apply 'F' to music that instantiates C. If my chest puffs out with pride this is not a sufficient basis for me to attribute pride to music that has an expansive quality. A form of bodily movement must be *all* that a person feels when he experiences a certain emotion—it must also give its name to the emotion—in order for music that instantiates the same form to be correctly characterized by the name of the emotion (according to Pratt's account).

Pratt's suggestion therefore could not provide a general solution to the problem of the apparent attribution to music of what is subjective. There are many moods and emotions that music is said to be qualified by which are such that the characterization of music by the use of words that signify these moods or emotions cannot be understood on the model that Pratt recommends. Furthermore, Pratt exaggerates not only generally but specifically the proper scope of his model. For example, he characterizes the Prelude to *Tristan und Isolde* as 'ardent, erotic, full of suspense, longing, unfulfillment', with the implication that this characterization can be accommodated by his theory.²⁰ But not all these features are qualities of, or derive from characteristics of, bodily movement. When we experience a passionate erotic desire that is uncertain of fulfilment our condition does not derive its name from the kinds of bodily movement that we may feel when in that condition.²¹

REFERENCES

- ¹ Carroll C. Pratt, *The Meaning of Music* (New York, 1931), p. 157f.
- ² John Ruskin, *Modern Painters*, Volume III (London, 1856), Chap. XII.
- ³ *The Meaning of Music*, p. 184.
- ⁴ Even if movement need not be continuous—so that an object could change its position without tracing a continuous path between its different positions—an object moves from A to B only if it is first at A and then at B.
- ⁵ '... in addition to the purely qualitative pitch-character by which tones are readily placed with respect to each other along a scale there may be discovered an intrinsic spatial character in tones ...' *The Meaning of Music*, p. 54.
- ⁶ Edmund Gurney, *The Power of Sound* (London, 1880), p. 139.
- ⁷ *The Power of Sound*, pp. 139–40.
- ⁸ Differently coloured patches of paint on a canvas can be seen as at different distances from the plane of the canvas. But this does not imply that the experience of seeing colours does provide a proper parallel to the experience of pitch. For (i) the sense in which one colour can be seen as behind another colour is not the same as that in which one note can be heard as higher or lower than another (ii) differ-

ence in pitch is difference in distance and direction: difference in colour is difference in kind which may *in addition* involve perceived differences in distance.

- ⁹ There are many respects in which the analogy fails to hold. For example: more than one sound (with the same timbre) can have the same pitch at the same time but not more than one chair can occupy the same spot at the same time; two sounds of different pitch cannot change their distance apart unless one of them changes intrinsically (namely, with respect to pitch), whereas two chairs can change their distance apart without either of them changing intrinsically.
- ¹⁰ It will be clear from what I have said that the words 'up' and 'down', and their relatives 'high' and 'low' and the comparative forms of these words, are not needed in the description of the material of music. When the predicate 'is higher than' is used to describe pitch relations it does not stand for the same relation as it does when it is used to describe spatial relations, and the relation it stands for can be fully characterized without using the predicate or any predicate synonymous with it. Its use in the domain of pitch no more coincides with its use in the domain of space than it does with its use in the domain of numbers. Furthermore, it is in general unnecessary to bring the concepts high and low to the appreciation of music. Only if music has a certain kind of representational intent will it be necessary to hear sounds as specifically high or low. And the prime manifestation of the experience of hearing a note as high will be the inclination to apply the word 'high' (or a synonym) to the note.
- ¹¹ For the purpose of the following argument it is not in fact necessary to accept this thesis. There would be little loss of plausibility if it were replaced by the

account I have offered of the experience of pitch.

- ¹² A similar misrepresentation is found in the works of Susanne K. Langer. See her *Feeling and Form* (London, 1973), pp. 107–8.
- ¹³ We talk of perceiving movement in cases where continuity of change of position is manifestly lacking. But it is clear that in such cases we do not literally see an object moving from one position to another. Rather, we draw this conclusion from what we do see.
- ¹⁴ *The Meaning of Music*, p. 198.
- ¹⁵ *The Meaning of Music*, p. 189.
- ¹⁶ *The Meaning of Music*, pp. 197–8.
- ¹⁷ *The Meaning of Music*, p. 203. See also 'Structural Vs Expressive Form in Music', *The Journal of Psychology*, 1938.
- ¹⁸ Carroll C. Pratt, 'Objectivity of Aesthetic Value', *Journal of Philosophy* Vol. XXXI (1934).
- ¹⁹ Pratt believed that music is intrinsically an autonomous art. But it can be given an extraneous meaning by listeners and treated as a heteronomous art which is representative of phenomena external to itself. And there is one kind of meaning that music is often given which is only a short step away from the intrinsic nature of music's formal structure and that is closely related to the fact that music and bodily movements which are involved in moods and emotions can have common characteristics: the kind of significance that is accorded to music by Schopenhauer's theory of music demystified. And this kind of meaning can have a special importance. See *The Meaning of Music*, Part III.
- ²⁰ *The Meaning of Music*, p. 204.
- ²¹ I would like to thank David Landells, Jerrold Levinson and Colin McGinn for their comments on a previous version of this paper.

IS MUSIC A LANGUAGE OF THE EMOTIONS?

Stephen Davies

IN DISCUSSING musical works and their appreciation we accept that they may be understood (and misunderstood) and that a person who understands a musical work can be asked to justify his understanding. The nature of aesthetic discussions and disagreements about music indicates that we accept that music is the bearer of meaning or sense and that it is this meaning or sense which the listener comprehends when he is said to understand a musical work. Nevertheless, neither *what* it is that music means, nor the way in which music bears its meaning is readily apparent. It is these subjects which are considered below.

What is the meaning of a piece of music? It is whatever it is that we understand when we (can be said by others to) understand a musical work aesthetically; it is that which interests us and which we value in musical works. On the phenomenological level, a typical understanding response to music is the experience of hearing the way in which one series of notes gives rise to another. It is to recognize that a musical continuation makes 'sense' (or does not make 'sense') as a continuation of that which preceded it, even where the continuation might not have been predicted on hearing the antecedent passage. We experience music not merely as a succession of notes, and chords, but as developing, recasting and otherwise exploring its materials in a connected way. Our attempt to understand music is premised on the belief that we can attempt reasonably to justify and not merely explain the course of the music.

If music never referred us beyond itself, so that all that was involved in understanding music was an appreciation of its structure, its texture, the thematic relationships and so on, then the nature of musical understanding (and, thus, of musical 'meaning') would raise few philosophical difficulties. But music does refer beyond itself in that it is expressive of emotions, and there are considerable philosophical difficulties to be faced in attempting to account for the way in which music is expressive of emotions. Since it is arguable that the listener usually reveals his understanding of the music through his appreciation of, and response to, that which is expressed in music (in those cases where the music is expressive), such difficulties cannot be dismissed in discussing the nature of musical meaning. I do not wish to claim that all music is expressive of emotions. But the importance attached

to the appreciation of such expressiveness, where it occurs, as indicating that the listener understands the music, clearly suggests that the conceptually interesting difficulties in describing music as expressive of emotion are of central importance in a consideration of the philosophically interesting cases of musical meaning.

Obviously we would not say of a person that he understood a musical work if he was unaware, for example, that its themes were related, that texturally and harmonically, some sections were denser than others, that some sections were relatively more tense than others, and so on. We would expect him to be able to give some account of such matters, though not necessarily in technical terms. But, if the music were expressive of some emotion, we would be dubious of the claim that the person understood the piece, even if he could provide a description of his experience of the relatedness of its themes, etc., if he failed to notice the expressiveness of the music. A musician with a complete grasp of the music's technical features may not be able to play it convincingly until told to play it as if in 'cheerful resignation' rather than 'tense foreboding'. Whilst not all music is expressive of emotion, our present notions of musical understanding and musical meaning would be quite other than they are if music were never experienced, and responded to, as expressive of emotion.

Sometimes we say 'This music is expressive' without feeling that we can adequately answer the question 'What, then does it express?' A person may feel that he cannot convey in words that which is expressed in a musical work when he is describing it to another who is not familiar with the piece, but if he says that the work is sad he has conveyed something about it, although he may not have captured the quality of the sadness that he finds so interesting.¹ Now, of course, to understand a musical work is not simply to be able to name the emotional states expressed in it. To justify an understanding of some particular work it must be described in such a way as to reveal it as the sole source of our experience of the emotion expressed in it. In describing the emotions expressed in music one is led to describe the course of the music and the experience of its connectedness.

So far I have suggested that to understand the meaning of a musical work expressive of emotion will involve appreciating the emotions expressed in it, and that we are not precluded from identifying and describing these emotions. I have also suggested that there are few philosophically interesting difficulties in accounting for the 'sense' or 'meaning' of music in which emotions are not expressed. In discussing musical meaning, I will be considering the philosophically interesting case, that of how expressive music gets its meaning. The question is: How is musical reference to the expressed 'content' secured? In the following it will be argued that music is understood neither as a (natural) language, nor as a non-linguistic symbol system, before it is suggested that music is 'naturally'

meaningful (in the Gricean sense) of emotions. I will be attacking the view that our *present* notions of musical understanding and musical meaning are best to be elucidated by showing that these notions are strictly analogous to the notions of linguistic meaning or of meaning determined by the conventions of a symbol system.

Several writers have argued that, in understanding a musical work, we appreciate it as having a propositional function.² According to this theory, music has assertoric meaning in the way that declarative sentences have assertoric meaning; musical compositions are a means for the communication of information in the way that assertoric sentences of natural languages are. Music differs from natural languages only in that its field of reference is restricted to the world of emotions. Music, in this theory, is a semantic system with a vocabulary and a syntax.

One objection to this view is the following. To say that music is understood as having an assertoric function is to claim that music refers to emotions *and* goes on to describe the emotions to which it refers. In developing a parallel between music and language it is not sufficient to show that music may refer us to emotional states, it is also necessary to show how emotions are described in music. Whilst there may be a point to developing a description of the emotion expressed in a musical work in terms of the musical features through which the emotion is presented, it is not clear that music provides for the *completion* of one's thoughts about the expressed emotion in *the way* in which the predicate of an assertoric sentence provides for the completion of one's thoughts about the subject of that sentence. The emotion is announced through the music rather than described by the music.

The theory under consideration might attempt to meet this objection by claiming that musical 'sentences' are of the type called by Strawson 'feature-placing sentences'.³ That is, it might be claimed that musical sentences perform the same function as a sub-class of the class of assertions found in natural languages. The assertions in this sub-class introduce neither particulars nor sortal universals (such as, fall of snow); they introduce 'feature-universals' or 'feature-concepts' as does, for example, the sentence 'It is snowing'. According to this view, 'The music is sad' can be analysed as asserting that 'There is sound and sadness here'. Feature-placing sentences are not subject-predicate sentences; they introduce a universal or a 'stuff' and place it in space and time. It might be said that in feature-placing sentences, the assertion is effected through the location of the subject.

This answer to the objection fails on two counts. First, it might be suspected that it is 'particular-placing' rather than 'feature-placing' which is required. By feature-placing the subject is transformed into a universal (or, sometimes, a 'stuff'), so that 'Sadness is here' is not equivalent to 'The (bit

of) sadness in which you are interested is here'. The counter to the objection loses the fact that our interest in the expressiveness heard in music is an interest in the particular expressiveness of a particular piece of music. Second, the possibility of feature-placing sentences within a language presupposes the possibility within the language of assertions in which particulars and sortal universals are introduced.⁴ That is, there could be no language, as the counter to the objection claims, in which all assertions were of the feature-placing type. The attempt to analyse 'The music is sad' as 'There is sound and sadness here' will fail. We will be forced to conclude that what is involved in musical reference is not feature-placing but, rather, something like brute 'naming'. And, as Rhees has argued, that is an idle, sense-less game except within the context of a fuller language within which it is possible for people to tell each other things.⁵

The second objection to the theory that music is understood aesthetically as a language like any other argues that musical meaning is unlike linguistic meaning in that, whereas the latter depends upon the possibility of truthful assertion, the notion of truth plays no part in the determination of the former. Two (contrasting) accounts of linguistic meaning (of an assertion) for natural languages are given in the contemporary literature. The first defines the meaning of an assertion in terms of the assertion's truth-conditions; the second defines the meaning of an assertion in terms of the assertion's verifiability conditions or justified assertability.⁶ Fortunately it is not necessary that we adjudicate between these accounts before we are able to argue that music does not constitute a language of the emotions such as could answer to either of these views. Both definitions of linguistic meaning entail that language is essentially a *semantic* system, and it can be argued that music is not understood as such. Both accounts of linguistic meaning entail that the meaningfulness of linguistic utterances in all their uses depends upon the possibility of truthful assertion. The non-assertoric uses of language depend upon and follow from the possibility that those same words can have a use in the making of truthful assertions. Within the context of a semantic system by which communication can be effected, reference and meaning entail the possibility of truthful assertion. As Rhees has argued, there can be no language which admits of the possibility of non-assertoric uses of sentences which does not also admit of the possibility of an assertoric use of sentences.⁷

To understand a musical utterance is not to know whether that utterance is true or false. We do not regard musical utterances as subject to truth-conditions or as meeting standards of assertive correctness or incorrectness of use. In respect of its meaning, music cannot usefully be compared to a language.

It might be argued that the above conclusion was reached too hastily. For, whilst music obviously is not a natural language, the appreciation of

musical meaning and the appreciation of the meaning of a declarative sentence may be, in important respects, analogous. It might be argued, for example, that musical reference is like reference in the sentences of a natural language to the extent that both types of reference are secured by the conventions of a symbol system. The conventions, by means of which the symbols are systematized, serve to make manifest the symbolizer's intentions and thus his meaning to his audience. According to this view, music is understood as a non-linguistic symbol system.

An account of meaning which applies both to linguistic and non-linguistic symbol systems is offered by Grice.⁸ He analyses utterer's occasion-meaning—'The utterer meant by uttering x (an instance or token of an utterance type, such as a word, sentence, gesture, name or whatever) that x '—as follows: For some audience, A, U uttered x intending (a) A to produce a particular response, r ; (b) A to think (recognize) that U intends (a); and (c) A to fulfil (a) on the basis of his fulfilment of (b). This definition is inadequate as it stands to cope with some of the less usual instances of utterer's occasion-meaning, but it is adequate for our purposes.

Now, if the utterance is a work of art and if the audience's interest in the work of art is an aesthetic one, then the third condition, (c), is not necessarily met. An aesthetic interest in the work of art concerns itself with the best (most aesthetically rewarding) reading of the work of art, without treating the work of art merely as a vehicle for the communication of the artist's thoughts. An aesthetic interest is an interest in what the artist has 'to say', but an interest in what the artist has 'to say' need not necessarily be an interest in the artist's intentions (made manifest in the work of art or by their avowal) that the work of art be read and understood in one way rather than another. The audience may respond, say, to a poem as it was intended to respond, and it may also recognize that the poet intended it to respond this way, but the response, if aesthetic, is not *determined* by the recognition of the artist's intention. That is, the acceptance of the first condition, (a), does not rest on the recognition that the second condition, (b), is fulfilled. This is a general point about the way in which aesthetic interest differs from an interest in utterer's occasion-meaning, and about the way in which the aim of aesthetic understanding differs from the aim of understanding an utterance spoken on a particular occasion as communicating a meaning intended by the utterer. This point holds true of art (such as literature and representational paintings) which *could* be understood *non-aesthetically* according to Grice's model, because they constitute or fall within symbol systems. The same argument shows that music is not understood as a non-linguistic symbol system, but leaves open the question of whether music could be so understood.

In the same paper Grice distinguishes cases of 'naturally' determined meaning from 'non-naturally' determined meaning. Non-natural meaning

(meaning_{NN}) is secured by the conventions of a symbol system which serve within the system to make understandable the meaning that the utterer intended to convey. Non-natural meaning may be either linguistic or non-linguistic. Grice uses 'Those three rings on the bell (of the bus) mean that "the bus is full"' as his example of non-natural meaning. Natural meaning (meaning_N) is not determined by the conventions of a symbol system. Grice uses 'Those spots mean measles' as his example of natural meaning. Five points of difference between these two kinds of meaning are noted.

(1) '*x means that p*', with meaning_N entails *p* (the person must *have* measles); but with meaning_{NN} *p* is not entailed (the bus-conductor can be mistaken). (2) With meaning_N we cannot argue from '*x means that p*' to 'by those spots *it* is meant that he has measles'; but with meaning_{NN} we can argue from the sentence to what is meant *by* it. (3) With meaning_N, we cannot argue from the sentence to the conclusion that someone meant by the spots so-and-so; but, with meaning_{NN}, we can argue to the conclusion that someone meant that the bus was full. (4) With meaning_N, the sentence cannot be restated in such a way that 'mean' is followed by a sentence or phrase in reported speech (we cannot say 'Those spots mean "he has measles"'); but with meaning_{NN}, we can do this. (5) With meaning_N, the sentence can be restated beginning with 'the fact that' (as in 'The fact that he has those spots means that he has measles') without changing its meaning; but with meaning_{NN}, a restatement of the sentence in this form does not preserve the meaning of the original version, although both statements may be true.

Representational paintings and the statements found in literature are clearly understood as non-naturally meaningful. 'This picture of Wellington means that "Wellington looked [or "... ought to have looked ...", or "... might have looked ...", etc.] like this"' is substitutable for 'Those three rings on the bell mean that "the bus is full"'. Though this is not to say that an *aesthetic* interest in a portrait of Wellington is an interest in the Wellington-likeness of the painting, nor that an *aesthetic* interest in the statements found in literary works is concerned with their truth. The appreciation of that which a painting represents or that which is stated in a literary work rests on a recognition of the conventions of their respective symbol systems. However, 'This music means sadness' would seem to be more readily substituted for 'Those spots mean measles' than for 'Those three rings on the bell mean that "the bus is full"', at least in (1), (4) and (5).

Grice's second and third criteria leave vague the way in which we should treat cases where something that is naturally meaningful is given an intentional use; for example, where a person frowns intentionally. As Grice points out, our recognition that the frown was intentional would

normally require understanding it as non-naturally meaningful to the extent that one's concern is with that which the frown is intended to convey rather than with the significance merely of the person's appearance. Since, usually, music presents in sound the appearance of the emotion that it was intended by the composer to present, it would seem that musical expressiveness should be analysed as non-naturally meaningful after all. But the case of musical expressiveness differs importantly from that in which a person frowns intentionally. It is because one's interest in facial expressions normally follows from a concern with their indicating how the person feels that an intentional frown becomes non-naturally meaningful, whereas an unintended frown is naturally meaningful. By contrast, the expressiveness of music does not interest us as indicating how any person feels; our concern is with the *appearance* of emotion rather than with a particular feeling as indicated in such an appearance.

Grice's second and third criteria do not suggest that all intentional 'utterances' must be understood as non-naturally meaningful. Where the meaningfulness of the utterance depends upon an appreciation of the intention, as is the case with onomatopoeic words or where intentional frowns interest us as signifying a person's feelings, non-natural meaning is involved. But where the intention may be disregarded without this thereby potentially altering the meaning of the 'utterance', the meaning of the utterance is natural rather than non-natural. In the case of musical expressiveness, the composer's intentions are essentially irrelevant. Whilst it may be the case that most music that is expressive presents the appearance of emotions that the composer intended it to present, the absence of such an intention does not affect the expressiveness heard in a musical work. Either the music presents the appearance of some emotion or it does not, independently of its being intended or not to present the appearance of this emotion. Once more there is an obvious contrast with representational painting. A painting of a man may resemble Wellington whether or not it was intended to do so. But representation (as opposed to mere resemblance) crucially involves intention. However much a painting may resemble Wellington, it does not represent him unless it was intended to represent him. The appreciation of representation involves the recognition of intention in a way that the appreciation of musical expressiveness (as the presentation of appearances of emotions) does not.

With the above argument in mind, it appears to be the case that music is naturally, rather than non-naturally, meaningful of emotions. Thus, music is not even like a language to the extent that musical reference to emotions is secured by the conventions of a non-linguistic symbol system. Musical reference to emotions is natural rather than conventional. Music does not constitute a symbol system; the means by which music is expressive are importantly unique to each piece. There are conventions in music, but

they are formal and stylistic rather than semantic; that is, they do not serve to reveal the composer's intention in order that we may appreciate that which is expressed in the music. If composers have regularly expressed sadness by similar musical means, this is because those means are naturally expressive of sadness rather than because audiences have associated those means with intentions to express particular emotional states. Of course, recognizing that which is expressed in a musical work may require some familiarity with the stylistic conventions (and so it may be difficult to appreciate the expressiveness of non-Western music for example), but not because the conventions make the expressiveness understandable as the expressiveness that the music was intended to convey.

With words and representational pictures we can ignore what was meant or what was represented and consider the meanings that may be put upon the words or that which the picture is experienced as resembling. It is because we can distinguish between what is meant and what is 'said' that an *aesthetic* interest in literature and representational pictures may ignore the artist's intentions as determining *the* meaning of his creation. Symbol systems which primarily serve the end of communication provide for the possibility of an interest in the meanings of 'utterances' which does not concern itself with *intended* meanings. But we cannot make a similar distinction between that which a musical work expresses and that which it is intended to express (except by means of independently conveyed information about the composer's intentions). Music does not lend itself to the Gricean analysis of utterer's occasion meaning in respect of its expressiveness. There is no way of recognizing the composer's intention to express some emotion within the context of the music except by taking that which is actually expressed as realizing the composer's intention. Because it does not constitute a symbol system, the audience cannot fulfil (b), the second part of Grice's analysis of utterer's occasion meaning, when appreciating the expressiveness of a musical work. The composer's intentions as regards the expressiveness of his work drop out at the second level of Grice's account of utterer's occasion meaning, and thus music could not be understood non-aesthetically as conveying such a meaning. Whereas, in the case of literature and representational painting, the second level in Grice's analysis becomes irrelevant only where an aesthetic interest leads the audience to ignore the third level of intention.

Having claimed that music is naturally meaningful of the emotions expressed in it, it remains to demonstrate an appropriate connection between the music and the emotional states to which it refers us. Obviously the connection is not a causal one, as is often the case with meaning_N (where, for example, smoke means fire, or where a groan wrung from a person means that he feels sad). Already I have suggested that music expresses emotions by presenting or exemplifying the appearances of emo-

tions. How could a connection be established between appearances of emotion and the human world in which emotions are felt? That is, how can music refer to emotions by exemplifying their appearances?

The fact that a musical work exemplified some property, for example harmoniousness, would not normally lead us to say that it thereby *refers* to harmoniousness. Music presents many properties without thereby referring beyond itself. Why, where the features presented are expressive, are we inclined to understand the music as referring to the world in which emotions are felt? Normally we are interested in appearances of emotion as indicating how the 'owner' of the appearance *feels*; our interest in the appearances of emotions is parasitic on a more fundamental concern with the feelings indicated in such appearances. Even where we interest ourselves in the appearances of emotions for themselves, a reference to the world of feelings remains implicit. We may divorce our interest in the particular appearance of some emotion, sadness say, from a concern with the particular sadness felt by the 'owner' of this appearance, but the appearance alone could sustain such an interest only where it was taken as referring to sadness *in general*. So it is, I think, that the emotions expressed in music refer generally to emotions although they are not taken as signifying any particular person's feeling of an emotion, and so it is that we regard musical expressiveness as worthy of interest.

It remains to show how appearances of emotions may be presented in the sounds which comprise a musical work. Before sketching my own answer to this difficulty I will consider briefly the theory proposed by Susanne Langer. Although I wish to reject Langer's theory, it is of the type required by the preceding argument. That is, she argues that music is naturally meaningful of emotions and that it refers to them by means of presenting their 'appearances' or forms.

In the writings of Susanne Langer we find an attempt to analyse music as naturally meaningful (in her terms, as a presentational symbol).⁹ She specifically rejects the view that music is non-naturally meaningful (a 'discursive' or 'propositional' symbol). According to Langer, a presentational symbol brings to mind a conception of the subject symbolized. The appropriate response to a presentational symbol is a thought; not a thought *about* the subject referred to, but, rather, an idea or conception of the *nature* of that subject. One thing, S, can be a presentational symbol of another thing, O, by virtue of the fact that the *form* of S is 'iconic' with the *form* of O. No feature of a thing can be dismissed *a priori* as irrelevant to its form. The form of an object can be abstracted from it in thought (it can be known), but not in practice (it cannot be described except ostensively). Where two forms are iconic, the essential relation between the elements of the two objects are identical, even though the 'materials' of which the elements are comprised may be unlike. Thus the relation between the aural elements of

a musical work can be the same as the relation between the thoughts and sensations which comprise a feeling. When a composer symbolizes some feeling in his music he 'transforms' the relation between the elements of that feeling to a relation between auditory elements by applying the appropriate 'laws of projection'. He could not state these laws; they are applied unconsciously and intuitively. And when his audience appreciates his music as a presentational symbol of that feeling, they recognize the iconicity between the form of the feeling and the form of the music unconsciously and intuitively. Where one form is recognized as a transformation of another with which it is iconic, the audience becomes aware of the first form-bearer as a presentational symbol of the second form-bearer.

Langer's theory is founded on a questionable characterization of the nature of emotions and it might be attacked on this and many other grounds. However, in the following discussion it is the notion of a presentational mode of symbolism which is confronted. The central concepts of Langer's theory—indescribable forms, undemonstrable iconicity and unstatable laws of projection—are unintelligible. If 'unintelligible' means here 'cannot be explained in language', Langer would agree. But, we might continue, the problem that her theory 'answers' is such that it demands an explanation which can be given in language and, therefore, that the unintelligibility of her theory is a crucial weakness. It is not nonsensical to ask how art can be a natural bearer of emotions in the way that it is nonsensical to ask how (genuine) groaning can be expressive of, say, sadness. Because it is not obvious how (non-sentient) works of art can be bearers of (disembodied) emotions, the first question requires an answer where the second does not. By denying the possibility of an answer to the first question Langer deprives her theory of significant content. Rather than solving the problem, as it purports to do, Langer's theory restates the apparent fact to which the nature of aesthetic discourse testifies—that we hear emotions in music, that music is naturally meaningful of emotions—in new and misleading terms.

Presumably Langer would claim that the ultimate and only real test of her theory is that, once we have understood what presentational symbols are like, we recognize that, in appreciating works of art as expressive, we are appreciating them as presentational symbols; that is, as conveying conceptions of emotions. However, when her claims are tested against our experience of the expressiveness of the music, they prove to be false. The expressiveness of music sometimes seems to demand an emotional response from the listener. Whilst it is obvious that the presentation of an emotion in a musical work might sometimes compel an emotional response from the listener, it is not at all obvious that the presentation of the *conception* of an emotion would ever compel an emotional response. Langer's theory

removes emotion from art, replacing it with conceptions of emotions. In so doing, her theory removes the basis for emotional responses to musical works and makes mysterious the power of music to evoke emotional responses. That is to say, her theory severs the connection between emotions in music and emotions in life upon which an acceptable characterization of the nature of aesthetic responses and interest depend. In responding emotionally to musical works as we do, we are not responding to them as natural signs conveying *conceptions* of emotions.

Rather than arguing (as Langer did) that it is the forms of music and emotions which resemble each other, one might argue that music is naturally expressive because the dynamic character of music is experienced as significantly similar to human behaviour in which emotions are expressed. Movement is heard in music. The relative highness and lowness of notes provides a dimension in aural space within which music moves through time. Thus, if the characteristic behavioural expression of an emotion, X, has the dynamic form, Y, and if a musical work is heard as having the same dynamic form, then X is heard in the music.

Such a theory faces a major objection. However close may be the analogy between one's experience of musical movement and the dynamics of human behaviour, it could never be the case that musical movement expresses emotions such as those expressed by human behaviour, since there is no felt-emotion which finds expression in music. Because music is non-sentient, musical movement could not be heard as expressive *just as* human behaviour may be seen as expressive, since, in the paradigmatic cases, our recognition of the expressiveness of human behaviour is founded on our understanding of that behaviour as the expression of something that is *felt*. The objection rightly points out that emotion-words do not retain their primary use (that of denoting the experience of an occurrent emotion) when used in describing musical expressiveness. The primary use of emotion-words cannot be learned solely from musical examples, and key distinctions, such as that between pretended and genuine expressive behaviour, do not arise in the musical case. Furthermore, it will not be possible to meet the objection by arguing that emotion-words are given a special, secondary use applicable only to musical expressiveness. Unless the sadness heard in music can be connected somehow to the sadness that people feel and express, our interest in the expressiveness of music will be inexplicable. If it is only by chance that emotion-words are given this special, aesthetic use, there is no *reason* why we should not be uninterested in musical expressiveness.

However, the objection can be met if we can show that there is a secondary use of emotion-words which applies to people and that it is this same use which is applied to musical expressiveness. While admitting that the use of emotion-words in connection with music is secondary, it will be

possible to demonstrate that this use preserves the meanings that the words have in their primary use by explaining how the same secondary use in connection with sentient beings is parasitic on the primary use. Now, there is a secondary use of emotion-words which does not involve (even implicit) reference to felt-emotions. In this use we talk of the expressive character of an appearance; usually a person's or animal's appearance. Thus, one might say that a Saint Bernard is a sad-looking dog without meaning that Saint Bernards feel sad any more often than other breeds of dog. So, it might be possible to argue that music is naturally meaningful of the emotions expressed in it by showing that musical 'reference' to emotions is secured by virtue of the fact that musical movement mirrors the bearing, carriage or gait of people in that *both* music and people are experienced as wearing appearances which present emotion-characteristics. That is, one might argue that the recognition in music of emotional expressiveness depends upon an analogy between the experience of hearing expressiveness in music and seeing bearings, carriages and gaits as presenting appearances of expressiveness (which pay no regard to what is felt).¹⁰

Of course, the view advocated above must be argued in detail. In particular it will be crucial to explain *how* it is that music can be experienced as presenting the appearance of emotions; that is, how the dynamic character of music is appreciated as analogous to actions rather than to mere movements. Elsewhere I have tried to demonstrate that such explanations are possible.¹¹ Here the concern has been to indicate that a consideration of the nature of musical meaning leads us towards a theory of the kind proposed above.

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- ¹ This argument derives from R. Wollheim, *Art and Its Objects*, Sec. 48–49, and from R. Scruton, *Art and Imagination* (1974), pp. 78–83.
- ² See especially D. Cooke, *The Language of Music* (1962); L. Meyer, *Emotion and Meaning in Music* (1970).
- ³ *Individuals* (1964), pp. 202–217.
- ⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 214–225.
- ⁵ 'Wittgenstein's Builders', *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* (1959–1960).
- ⁶ I have in mind the views of Donald Davidson and of Michael Dummett.
- ⁷ Rhees, *op. cit.*
- ⁸ 'Meaning', *The Philosophical Review* (1957).
- ⁹ See especially *Philosophy in a New Key*.
- ¹⁰ In *Languages of Art* (1968), Goodman analysed expressiveness in art as involving reference through *metaphorical* exemplification. Whilst my own view retains the key notions of reference and exemplification, I have rejected in the above the claim that the predication of emotion-words to works of art is metaphorical. It is an extremely narrow view of meaning which concludes that all non-primary uses of words are metaphorical; a view which fails to recognize that live metaphors die at the time when they are taken into general use. Emotion-words have a general, perfectly licit (although secondary) literal use when predicated of works of art.
- ¹¹ 'The Expression of Emotion in Music', *Mind* (1980).

NOLT ON EXPRESSION AND EMOTION

Robert Stecker

IN A recent article,¹ John Nolt has attempted to resurrect the often criticized view that expression of emotion in works of art is to be analysed in terms of the emotional affect the work has on its audience. Nolt labels analyses of this sort *emotionalism*. The particular version that Nolt propounds and defends is *modal emotionalism*, viz. 'An art object *a* expresses an affective state *p* if and only if *a* tends to evoke *p*.'

According to Nolt, modal emotionalism escapes objections fatal to other versions of emotionalism according to which: 'An art object *a* expresses an affective state *p* if and only if *a* causes me (others, most people, a selected group of people) to feel *p*.'

These versions, all of which are called *naïve emotionalism* by Nolt, succumb to the objection that an art object may express sadness 'without ever making anyone sad' (p. 145). However, since modal emotionalism analyses expression in terms of a work's tendency to evoke emotions rather than in terms of the work's actual affect on people, it supposedly escapes this objection as well as other common criticisms of emotionalism.

I will argue that modal emotionalism is no more plausible than naïve emotionalism; indeed, depending on how we understood 'tendency', the former may be indistinguishable from a version of the latter. I will also show that '*a* tends to evoke *p*' is neither necessary nor sufficient for '*a* expresses *p*'. Finally, I will suggest that Nolt's most fundamental mistake does not consist in proposing an unsatisfactory analysis of artistic expression. Rather it consists in attempting to give a simple, general analysis of artistic expression in the first place.

I

Nolt's defence of emotionalism rests on the claim that modal emotionalism is more plausible than naïve emotionalism. However, the version of emotionalism that Nolt gives us is really no improvement. Nolt does not explicitly specify when a work has a tendency to evoke an affective state. Yet to leave this unspecified leaves the theory intolerably vague. Any work might evoke almost any response in someone and so *might* be said to have some tendency to do so, but this fact is irrelevant to the question whether a work expresses a certain affective state.

Nolt sometimes *suggests* that to have a tendency to evoke an affective state is to usually evoke it. 'There is no contradiction in saying that a person feels joy in the presence of sad music. What is proscribed is that joy is the usual reaction' (p. 145). I take it that Nolt thinks that if a work expresses sadness (or has a tendency to evoke sadness) *sadness* is the usual reaction. However, if we take having a tendency to evoke an affective state *p* to consist in a work's usually evoking *p* (if it has an audience), then modal emotionalism turns out to entail a version of naive emotionalism that Nolt admits to be indefensible, viz., *a* expresses *p* if and only if *a* evokes *p* in most people who see (hear, read) it. Recall that according to Nolt, in order to show this to be false 'one need only point out that a work of art may be sad without ever making anyone sad.' The same point applies to the suggested interpretation of modal emotionalism. If a work of art has an audience and makes none of them sad, it cannot be said to have a tendency to evoke sadness since it does not usually evoke sadness. Nevertheless, the work might still express sadness, so it is hard to see how modal emotionalism (on the suggested interpretation) fares better than naive emotionalism.

In fact, the suggestion that having a tendency to evoke *p* consists in usually evoking *p* is too simple because something may have a tendency to *F* but not usually *F* owing to a variety of interfering factors. It might be better to understand the claim that *a* has a tendency to evoke *p* as asserting *a* usually evokes *p* unless . . . followed by a set of interfering factors.

This more complicated conception of tendency does not save modal emotionalism from counter-example. In fact, Nolt himself provides a counter-example. As Nolt observes, most people are not moved by Wordsworth's poem 'She Dwelt among Untrodden Ways'. To be sure, Nolt suggests that the fact that we are not moved is due to an interfering factor—that we live in a cynical age (a claim with which we well might quarrel). Nevertheless, Nolt relies on us to recognize that the poem expresses 'sadness and grief' and not on the basis of recognizing that it would evoke sorrow if . . . Rather, we recognize that the poem expresses sorrow, according to Nolt, in virtue of recognizing what the poem means (p. 144) or represents (149). If a poem can be expressive in virtue of what it means or what it represents (and I will argue below that this is precisely the case), then modal emotionalism at least does not state a necessary condition for the expression of emotion in the arts.

II

So far I have argued that modal emotionalism is not more plausible than naive emotionalism and that it does not state a necessary condition for '*a* expresses *p*'. Now I will state objections to the claim that emotionalism (modal or naive) states a sufficient condition for '*a* expresses *p*'. Nolt is

aware of some of these objections, but it does not seem to me that he has satisfactory answers to them.

Let me begin with an objection that Nolt himself mentions. A work that is pretentious or inept or fraudulent or . . . may well evoke anger or annoyance in most of its audience. Since the anger is owing to a correct understanding of the work, I take it that it is *not* owing to interfering factors. So according to both naive and modal emotionalism the work expresses anger or annoyance since these are the emotions it evokes in its audience and the emotions it tends to evoke as well. But of course, the fact that we are angered by the work does not mean that it expresses anger.

Nolt replies to this by constructing an example in which we are angered upon being presented with a 'sculpture' consisting of a pile of old newspapers and claiming that in this case we are not angered by the 'object itself'—the pile of newspapers—but by something else—that we have been fooled. But emotionalism says that an art object expresses emotion only if *it* evokes emotion. So we have not been presented with a genuine counter-example to emotionalism since the 'object itself' does not evoke our anger.

The rejoinder to Nolt is, first, that sometimes, surely, works of art themselves anger us, and, if he has correctly described the situation in his example, he has done nothing to explain how emotionalism will deal with this problem since in his example, according to him, the work itself does *not* anger us.

Second, however, Nolt does not correctly describe the situation in his example. Why does the object itself not anger us? According to Nolt because, if we saw the pile of newspapers lying in the street, it would not evoke anger. Nolt overlooks that we can only be angered by an object under a description and that it is not likely that the relevant description, viz., 'art object', would occur to us if we saw the pile of newspapers lying in the street. However, if we did recognize the pile as 'that sculpture we saw last week' there is no reason why our anger shouldn't recur. In Nolt's example, it is indeed the object that makes us angry but it does so in the only way an object can—by being thought of in a certain way. (What should initially have roused our suspicion is the difference in category of Nolt's candidates for what makes us angry: a physical object on the one hand and a proposition on the other.)

The present objection to emotionalism might be met in another way not considered by Nolt. What we need to distinguish between is a work making us feel angry because it offends us and a work making us feel angry because it evokes anger in us. *Guernica* might evoke anger and it would correctly be said to do so precisely because the anger evoked is not directed against the work itself. Might it be the case that a work evokes an emotion only if the work itself isn't the 'object' of the emotion? I leave the answer to defenders of emotionalism.

However, even if the present objection to emotionalism can be met, there is a related objection to emotionalism that cannot be. This is an objection that Nolt does not consider.

It is often the case that we are moved by a work in virtue of an emotion the work expresses yet we do not feel that emotion but another. Thus if a work expresses grief we may not feel grief but something more akin to pity or compassion. According to emotionalism, the work expresses pity or compassion and this is wrong. Further, we would not feel pity unless we recognized the expression of grief independently of how we respond or anyone else responds to the work. So the expression of grief could not consist in the fact that the work evokes *any* emotion at all.

Finally I will mention one more objection. Emotionalism has plausibility only if we do commonly feel what works express. There is a more general reason than the one mentioned in the last paragraph to think we do not. Consider what we feel when we are moved by a sad piece of music. Nolt finds it unproblematic to call what we feel 'sadness'. I don't. When we are really sad, unless we are prone to a form of sentimentality, the feeling we have is not pleasurable. But what we feel when we are moved by sad music is a pleasurable feeling. Unless we identify this feeling with sentimental sadness, which seems to me undesirable, it becomes problematic whether we feel sadness at all. Nolt's only remark in this connection is that the pleasure we feel when listening to sad music is a cathartic reaction to the sadness we initially feel. But this overlooks that being moved by music is itself a pleasurable experience.

A possible reply to this last objection might go as follows. Even if the feeling that sad music evokes is not *real* sadness, it at least evokes something that resembles sadness. Perhaps we can call it 'aesthetic sadness', and we can say that *a* expresses *p* if and only if it tends to evoke aesthetic *p*.

Such a proposal will face difficulties of its own. The objection still holds that the emotions a work evokes are not necessarily the emotions it expresses. Second, we are owed an account of 'aesthetic *p*'. Third, some works may tend to evoke real emotions, e.g., *Guernica*, and we will want a justification for discounting this sort of evocation. Finally, the proposed analysis does not appear to be generally applicable even in the realm of musical expression. While sad music may often make us feel something akin to sadness, angry music (if there is such a thing) does not usually make us feel even something akin to anger. In fact, I doubt that there is anything it *tends* to make us feel.

III

I now will turn to the last claim that I said I would discuss, viz., that it is a mistake to try to give any simple, general analysis of expression of emotion in the arts. I cannot offer an adequate defence of this claim in this short paper. I can only briefly indicate how it might be defended.

When we speak of expression of emotion, whether in the arts or outside, we may be referring to a number of different things. It isn't necessarily the right policy to pick out one of these and to argue that this is what we ought to consider to be expression of emotion in the arts.

There is one kind of expression of emotion that is much like the expression of thought in that it essentially involves the articulation of beliefs (or other cognitive states) and attitudes. Thus, suppose I am angry with my friend and decide to have it out with him. I might say to him, 'How could you be so inconsiderate as to You know how important it is to me that . . . '. In saying this I am not stating that I am angry or describing my anger. I am expressing it by expressing thoughts and attitudes that are partly constitutive of it. (I will call such thoughts and attitudes the intentional content of an emotion.) In expressing my anger in this way, my friend not only comes to learn that I am angry but something about the determinate anger I am feeling.

Philosophical discussions of expression of emotion in the arts have largely ignored the kind of expression I have just tried to describe. I have done so in order to illustrate my thesis of the disunity of expression in the arts. While it does not seem to me possible to understand expression of emotion in literature without recognizing this kind of expression, there are other arts, e.g., instrumental music, in which it cannot occur at all.

Turning first to literature, consider the Wordsworth poem quoted by Nolt, 'She Dwelt among Untrodden Ways'. According to Nolt, the poem expresses sadness and grief in virtue of what it means or what it represents. While this is on the right track, I think there is a more informative way of putting the matter. We recognize the poem as an expression of grief because we recognize the thoughts expressed by the speaker in the poem as constituting the intentional content of his grief. (Notice that I am not saying that the poem tells us how Wordsworth feels, for the speaker may be imaginary, in which case the emotion will be as well.)

I would be the last to claim that literature expresses emotion only in the sense of expressing the intentional content of a (possibly imaginary) emotion. However, I believe it is this sort of expression that has fascinated literary critics and given literature expressive powers not found in many other arts.

Now one such art is instrumental music. It follows that, unless we deny that music expresses emotion, we must look for a different account of expression in music than the one I have just claimed pre-eminently applies to literature. If we look at the accounts of expression in music that are commonly given, the point is confirmed. Besides Nolt's emotionalism, two other accounts have been popular. According to one, when we say music expresses sadness (say) we are saying that music has a certain expressive property, *sadness*, distinct from but denoted by the same word as the

emotional state sadness.² Another view recommends that we switch our focus from the music to the listener (as emotionalism does also) and try to understand what it is to hear sadness in music or music as sad—the answer being that it is a species of aspect-perception.³ Whatever account we favour, we are thinking of expression of emotion in music in very different terms from those in which I suggested we think of expression of emotion in literature. If a common account is not possible for literature and music, it is not possible for art in general.

Before proposing emotionalism as an account of expression in the arts, Nolt sees acutely how other accounts of expression apply to some arts or individual works but not others. Only an *a priori* commitment to a general theory of artistic expression leads him to another, equally unsatisfactory theory.

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ENGLISH DECADENCE AND THE CONCEPT OF VISUAL PERSPECTIVE

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MAX BEERBOHM recognized that a preoccupation with style was a distinctive trait of the English Decadent poets when he noted their 'love of argot and archaism and the mysteries of style'.¹ Of course, Beerbohm was deprecating the self-consciousness of the Decadents' retreat from Victorian social and literary convention, yet his comment is important because it was an early recognition that the Decadents are of interest not so much for what they wrote as for the way they wrote it. Beerbohm notwithstanding, they were part of a generation of poets attempting to forge a style that excluded the 'tutti-frutti Tennysonian afflatus' later disparaged by T. S. Eliot and that enabled them to give shape to a vision of an inner world.

To accomplish this aim, many of the Decadents adhered to the technical precepts of French Parnassianism. Following Gautier, for example, they felt with Pater that poetry should aspire to the condition of the plastic arts, that it should have polished form and distinctness of outline. 'Carve, file, and chisel', advised Gautier in his poem 'L'art' (1857); 'Let your floating dream imprint itself in the resisting block'. From this element of French practice, the Decadent movement acquired whatever it has of exquisite perfection and *ordonnance*; and when Ezra Pound writes that Lionel Johnson's poems are 'small slabs of ivory, firmly combined and contrived', or when Desmond Flower calls Ernest Dowson's poems 'delicately tinted gems' brought to a 'brilliant degree of polish',² we think of the principles of composition implicit in the title of Gautier's volume, *Emaux et Camées* (*Enamels and Cameos*).³

In contrast stands the stylistic influence of poets such as Verlaine. For Verlaine, poetry was music, and depended for its effect not on the 'sculptured images' that Gautier's adherents sought, but on a certain vague but finely evoked atmosphere—similar, by the way, to what Whistler and the Impressionists strove for in painting. These concerns are made explicit in the poem 'Art Poétique' (1882), for example, where Verlaine advocates 'Music before all'; further, he calls for '*la nuance*'—'Not Colour, but only fine shading'. Verlaine's poetics were given currency in England by an admiring Arthur Symons in his 1893 essay, 'The Decadent Movement in Literature'. By 1899, in *The Symbolist Movement*, Symons had grown rapacious: '[Words] transform themselves for him into music, colour, and

shadow; a disembodied music, diaphanous colours, luminous shadow. They serve him with so absolute a self-negation, that he can write *romances sans parole* . . . in which scarcely a sense of interference of human speech remains'.⁴

Increasingly, then, poetry was justifying itself by its relationship with other art forms—painting, sculpture, and music. Note that as far as painting was concerned, this relationship is different from, or at least a further development of, the Horatian doctrine of *ut pictura poesis*, whose latest revival had come at the hands of the Pre-Raphaelites. The Decadents were not concerned with poetry's pictorialism, nor with its ability to frame iconographic or allegorical scenes. Their goal was a poetic language that reduced poetry to a play of forces by allowing the presentation of perceptions and emotions with recourse to as little of the supervening machinery of language as possible. Their goal—what later came to be known in France as *poésie pure*—was a verbal art that could be apprehended with the same immediacy as non-verbal art.

If the Decadents wanted style to be something more than just another Victorian decorative art, how did they translate theory into practice? More specifically, how did they use the resources of language in a way similar to an artist's use of line, colour, shape, and composition? Or, let us imagine Tristram Shandy's exclamation as a question: 'Just Heaven! how does . . . the insensible, more or less, determine the precise line of beauty in the sentence, as well as in the statue! How do the slight touches of the chisel, the pencil, the pen, the fiddle-stick, *et caetera*,—give the true swell, which gives the true pleasure!' (Vol. II, ch. 6).

Shandy's characteristic flippancy belies the intensity of his century's discussion of the question of affinities among art forms—discussion which then and now has also alerted us to the critical complexities involved in yoking a verbal medium to a non-verbal one. René Wellek and Austin Warren, in *Theory of Literature*, confirm judgements stretching from Gottfried Lessing (*Laocoön*) and Samuel Johnson (Life of Pope) to Irving Babbitt (*New Laokoon*) condemning the 'confusion' of genres.⁵ Yet, it is clear that many modern writers have continued to make it a major point of their poetic rubrics to eliminate barriers separating the arts from one another. Examples abound: the Pre-Raphaelite poets' interest in painting and the decorative arts; the architectural analogies of Proust and James; the use of the imagery of painting, mosaics, and other artefacts by poets as diverse as W. B. Yeats and Richard Wilbur; Donald Davie's belief that 'syntax is music'; and Howard Nemerov's dictum that 'poems speak about the silence of paintings'.⁶ Interrelationships such as these have been often noted, so I will limit this discussion to the relationship between Decadent poetic practice and the specific concept of perspective or foreshortening as it applies to the visual arts. This relationship is not a constant one across the

Decadent movement; on the contrary, close examination of the language of two characteristic Decadent poems turns up divergent attitudes towards the linguistic representation of depth and perspective suggested by the theory and practice of Gautier and Verlaine.

The influence of Verlaine is implicit in the title of Arthur Symons's most 'Decadent' volume, *Silhouettes* (1892). The very title bespeaks an intention to achieve certain overall visual effects in a verbal medium. A silhouette, of course, is a two-dimensional visual image that does not attempt to create the illusion of three-dimensionality. The artist can use the relative size of objects to suggest some foreshortening, yet each object within the frame is without depth, appearing only to lie on the surface of the picture's ground. It is worth noting, by the way, that Symons's contemporary, Aubrey Beardsley, used the stark contrast of black and white in a silhouette-like fashion in his pictures, often with a view to leaving spatial relationships fleeting and ambiguous, or to flatten his materials against the picture's ground. Symons's 'Music and Memory', while decidedly a minor poem, illustrates well the role of linguistic style in creating a verbal analogue of these visual features:

Across the tides of music, in the night,
Her magical face,
A light upon it as the happy light
Of dreams in some delicious place
Under the moonlight in the night.

Music, soft throbbing music in the night,
Her memory swims
Into the brain, a carol of delight;
The cup of music overbrims
With wine of memory, in the night.

Her face across the music, in the night,
Her face a refrain,
A light that sings along the waves of light,
A memory that returns again,
Music in music, in the night.

The first observation we make about this poem concerns its spare reliance on unmodified nouns and noun phrases. Symons has stripped the poem of all but four verbal elements, just two of which are predicates of independent clauses. As a consequence, the poem is structured by parataxis, by the contiguous placement of discrete but grammatically parallel elements and repeated words and phrases that cohere only when the reader stands back to take a broad view of the poem, looking for its essentials rather than its accidental details. The effect of this absence of strict differentiation is enhanced by phrases such as 'delicious place', 'throbbing music', and 'A light that sings'; in these expressions, the speaker is using synaesthesia, a

sense perception described in terms normally associated with another sense modality.

Symons relies heavily on apposition and absolute constructions, thus gaining great flexibility in the form and placement of noun phrases. The absolute construction, as in line 3, is common throughout his work. Or consider the effect of a phrase such as a 'carol of delight' (1.8), separated from the head noun by the intervening phrase, 'in the night'. We cannot be certain what, precisely, the phrase stands in apposition to; of course, 'memory' is the most likely candidate, but we cannot rule out an implied concept such as 'her memory swimming', while the word 'carol' suggests that the phrase may even be referring to 'soft throbbing music' in line 6. The point is that we are under no obligation to choose.

Symons uses apposition in at least two other ways. Often, the head noun is repeated but modified in some way, as in the phrase, 'Music, soft throbbing music'. Or, a series of appositives, as in stanza three, radiates from a single head noun. In both cases an initial perception is surrounded with accumulated details that give the appearance of remaining unprocessed by the speaker's cognitive faculties.

By arranging noun images in linear sequence with few grammatical markers of cohesion (that is, without relying on grammatical co-ordination and subordination to establish logical, temporal, or generic relationships among the poem's perceptual data), Symons captures the dislocations of nascent thought, where images succeed one another without distinction. In trying to find a linguistic equivalent for subjective emotions and ineffable thought processes, the poet calls on syntactic operations that de-emphasize clausal hierarchies and give prominence to phrasal constructions. These phrasal constructions transcribe a flickering sequence of imaginative moments that bleed into one another and that cohere by sound and semantic association rather than grammatical linkage. The reader is left with a generalized apprehension of the object instead of an atomistic dissection of it. He is left with a silhouette.

Thus, the rhetorical form of Symons's poem derives from certain attitudes to particular mental operations or functions. What we need to do now is to establish the nature of the relationship between this rhetorical form and features of the plastic arts that may be rooted in the same or similar mental operations or functions. To this end, consider the distinction Claude Lévi-Strauss makes between primitive art and professional or 'academic' art. Although Lévi-Strauss is discussing the plastic arts, his distinction can perhaps provide us with a bridge between rhetorical form in a poem and visual representation of perspective in the plastic arts.

Lévi-Strauss distinguishes academic art (or 'easel painting') from primitive art by suggesting that the former tends to be 'representational' while the latter tends to be 'non-representational'. Academic art, believing that it

has mastered both its sense of purpose and the principles of execution, can bring these to bear on the occasion of the work, indeed, is 'bound to do so'. As a consequence, the work of art reproduces (or 'externalizes') an empirical model, an 'occasion'. In contrast, primitive or non-representational art internalizes an occasion, which is 'timeless' and independent of circumstances'. The artist's focus is then less on trying to represent an external model and more on an externalized and spontaneous execution:

Pursuing this analysis, one might define nonrepresentational painting by two features. One . . . consists in a total rejection of the contingency of purpose: the picture is not made for a particular use. The other feature . . . is its methodical exploitation of the contingency of execution, which is claimed to afford the external pretext or occasion of the picture. Nonrepresentational painting adopts 'styles' as 'subjects'.

The relevance of this distinction to our understanding of Symons can be found in Lévi-Strauss's discussion of the perceptual basis of primitive art:

In so far as early art, primitive art and the 'primitive' periods of professional painting are the only ones which do not date, they owe it to this dedication of the accidental to the service of execution and so to the use, which they try to make complete, of the raw datum as the empirical material of something meaningful.⁷

Thus, to the extent that Symons de-emphasizes linguistic devices that would mediate the perception and arrangement of his materials, he engages in the 'methodical exploitation of the contingency of execution' and lends meaning to the raw data of experience.

What bearing, though, does this have on the specific question of visual perspective? Symons is nurturing a Romantic tradition that opposed the rationalistic psychology of the Enlightenment by re-asserting the presence of a creative bond between a perceiving consciousness and a perceived object. Within rational-theoretical systems of thought, objects are incontrovertibly separated from one another and from the perceiving consciousness. An art that reflects this mode of thought gathers around itself a broad range of structural devices enabling an individual and his culture to arrange and classify objects in increasingly abstract ways. Objects achieve significance for the individual by means of the clearly demarcated positions they occupy in structured space and time, and within relative scales of value. As Rudolf Arnheim has noted, for example, the Old Masters, wishing to preserve and enhance 'the material solidity of the visual world', developed the system of central perspective, which unifies space in a picture, at the same time establishing for the objects represented a clearly defined system of 'dominances' by locating them within depth planes.⁸ By unifying spatial representation within three dimensions, the Masters were using not only emotional capabilities to solve artistic problems, but reasoning powers as

well. But with the restoration of intuitive modes of thought, rational discriminations give way to discontinuity, and to a participatory link between perceiver and object. The reference of poetic language is now less to a putative 'real world', perceived scientifically, than to unfamiliar and elusive sensations that cannot be rendered systematically and logically. Landscape, then, becomes interior landscape, where objects exist in apposition to one another, or where temporal and spatial relationships among the objects represented are fluctuating and ambiguous. The reader's sense of visual 'perspective' is diminished because there is no longer a guiding hand placing objects in temporal, spatial, or ethical relationships. In the terms of the painter, the 'viewer' is no longer outside the frame, looking 'through the window' at proportioned and stabilized objects whose foreshortening creates the illusion of depth, of separation and discrimination; rather, the viewer is now within the frame, in a world of 'pure form', attending only to harmonies of undifferentiated, non-perspective space and shape.

'Music and Memory', then, bears some of the marks of non-representational art; the poem adopts verbal strategies that, by reflecting a specific attitude to the relationship between mind and object, are linguistic manifestations of visual perspective as it is employed in non-representational plastic art forms. The nature of this relationship between mind and object is perhaps best summarized by Ernst Cassirer. Discussing the distinctions between mythical consciousness and the scientific view of reality as they perceive the world of objects, Cassirer states with regard to the latter that 'every articulation in space presupposes an articulation in judgment; differences in position, size, and distance can only be grasped and assigned because the separate sensory impressions are differently regarded by the judgment, because a different *significance* is imputed to them.' Yet, as we have seen, Symons *avoids* 'articulating' sensory impressions in space (and time) and adopts an epistemological stance that we associate with primitive or mythic systems of thought: 'Here there are no different *degrees* of reality, no contrasting degrees of objective certainty. The resultant picture of reality lacks the dimension of depth—the differentiation of foreground and background so characteristically effected in the scientific concept with its distinction between "the ground" and that which is founded on it.'⁹ The application of Cassirer's line of thinking to our understanding of the visual or plastic arts is clear; yet the linguistic features of the Symons poem that we have noted, features that avoid pointing relations of temporality, logical subsumption, or causation, can be accounted for in Cassirer's terms as well.

It should be pointed out that my insistence on a 'precognitive' element in Symons's poetry should not be taken too literally. All artistic expression is at least one step removed from empirical reality, presupposing an act of consciousness—in verbal art, the interposition of language between mind

and object. Instead of a dichotomy between a 'precognitive' art and what I refer to later as a 'post-perceptual' art, it might be more accurate to think of a continuum; at one pole, objects are sharply defined and differentiated, articulated in space and time; at the other pole, objects remain an undifferentiated unity. On this continuum, then, we can think of tendencies that given works of art display. E. H. Gombrich has reminded us that 'The forms of art, ancient and modern, are not duplications of what the artist has in mind any more than they are duplications of what he sees in the outer world. In both cases they are renderings within an acquired medium, a medium grown up through tradition and skill.' On this basis, Gombrich concludes that 'The history of taste and fashion is the history of preferences, of various acts of choice between given alternatives . . . [A]n act of choice is only of symptomatic significance, is expressive of something only if we can reconstruct the choice situation.'¹⁰ My goal, in effect, is to reconstruct the choice situation confronting the Decadent poet, recognizing that such choices are not necessarily made at the polar extremes, but from among manifold alternatives in between.

For purposes of contrast, consider another representative poem by an English Decadent, Dowson's 'Benedictio Domini':

Without, the sullen noises of the street!
 The voice of London, inarticulate,
 Hoarse and blaspheming, surges in to meet
 The silent blessing of the Immaculate.

Dark is the church, and dim the worshippers,
 Hushed with bowed heads as though by some old spell,
 While through the incense-laden air there stirs
 The admonition of a silver bell.

Dark is the church, save where the altar stands,
 Dressed like a bride, illustrious with light,
 Where one old priest exalts with tremulous hands
 The one true solace of man's fallen plight.

Strange silence here: without, the sounding street
 Heralds the world's swift passage to the fire:
 O Benediction, perfect and complete!
 When shall men cease to suffer and desire?

I have suggested that Symons, in his appeal to non-empirical perceptual processes, positions his materials on a flat field. He undermines the solidity of the objects he describes by reducing to a minimum the effect of a third dimension. Dowson, on the other hand, typically interposes a more complex linguistic machinery and relies more on formal patterning. His poetry has a depth that separates the object of the poem from both the lyric subject and the reader. While Symons's poetry is essentially synthetic,

blurring distinctions among objects and perceptions more in the manner of Verlaine, Dowson's is analytic, carefully separating judgements and perceptions and arranging them temporally, spatially, and ethically. Stated differently, we can think of Dowson's object as being released from an amorphous ground, much as we might imagine a sculpture being released from Gautier's 'resisting block'.

The illusion of depth in Dowson's poem is created, first, by cohesive devices that orient the speaker's impressions relative to one another. Adverbials of place such as 'without' (twice), 'in', 'through', 'where' (twice), and 'here' mark the progress of the speaker's perceptions from the street, through the nave and the 'incense-laden air' to the altar, the priest and the Eucharist, and back to the street. Objects do not exist side by side, nor are they paraded before the reader in mere succession; on the contrary, sensory impressions are 'articulated' in space, or placed in a state of what Cassirer calls 'being-grounded-in-one-another'.¹¹ Moreover, all the objects within Dowson's frame refer to and irradiate from the picture's centre—the Eucharist—giving to the spatial relationships of the scene represented a sense of what Arnheim has called 'pointed flow', where space is seen as entering the picture from the sides and converging at a distance. The effect of this technique, says Arnheim, is 'a transformation of the simultaneity of space into a happening in time—that is, an irreversible sequence of events'.¹² If Arnheim is correct, then Symons's more isomorphic use of space is atemporal; that is, because the contents of his 'scene' are spatially independent, not referred to a focal point, we do not regard them as part of a temporally bound process. Dowson, in contrast, uses the third dimension to envision his lyric subject caught within a diachronic sequence of events whose significance is relative, a function of the individual's limited, historically determined point of view.¹³

The process of analysis and separation is sustained by means of a rather complex set of parallel grammatical structures which function to distinguish figure (the church) from a more dimly perceived ground. The first and fourth stanzas, devoted to the world outside the church which constitutes the poem's ground, are unified by shared grammatical and lexical features: the adverb 'without' positioned at the head of a clause; the repetition of the word 'street'; alliteration of the phoneme /s/; adjectives positioned after the nouns they modify (ll. 2–3, 15); present participles used as adjectives (ll. 3, 13); and finally, the sentence fragments that open each stanza. Further, just as the church itself is regarded as an enclosed sanctuary surrounded by a noisy world, so the two stanzas devoted to it are surrounded by these outer stanzas. The inner stanzas, too, are unified by grammatical parallelism, which separates the figural church from its ground: the inverted clauses that open each stanza, where the modifiers 'dark' and 'dim' are made prominent both by sentence structure and by

alliteration; the participial phrases in lines 6 and 10, each containing a simile; the structure 'modifier-"with"-noun' in lines 6 and 10; the adverbial clauses of lines 7 and 11; and the 'article-noun-complement' structure of lines 8 and 12.

Other language patterns contribute to this sense of separation in space. Of particular importance is the concentration of past participles in the middle stanzas: 'hushed', 'bowed', 'laden', 'dressed', and 'fallen'. In contrast to the present participles associated with the outside in stanzas one and four, these past participles indicate a vision of completion, of stasis, of spatial and temporal fixity. The emphasis in the outer stanzas is on process and motion, on noise and haste. The emphasis in the inner stanzas is on momentary serenity and fixed states.

Dowson, then, gives significant form to a set of attitudes and emotions by means of contrast—between inner and outer, order and chaos, fixity and process, spirit and flesh. Parallel grammatical features establish these contrasts, separating a sharply defined figural object from a less sharply defined ground. The figural object has not been merged with a flat field, as we imagine it would be in a poem by Symons; it has been allowed to emerge from that field, becoming a manipulable object in space. Once again, Arnheim is instructive. He argues that the densely textured objects with continuous contours that we perceive as lying in front of the ground are not merely static contours; rather, they seem to tear away from the ground in an aggressive way. They are 'configurations of forces' which are 'actively outgoing', appearing actually to compress the ground, or at least to be in a state of tension with it. This disposition of convex shapes is especially apparent in sculpture, where convexity can appear to embody a force that seems to expand and rise. Dowson's poem, I am arguing, reflects these principles, for the church is made—by the very texture of the poem's language—to 'rise' as a coherent, self-contained, assertive, searching whole, one which looms large in the vision of the lyric speaker seeking escape from a disordered world of temporal flux.¹⁴

Both Symons and Dowson use the structure of language to convey effects that we ordinarily regard as visual and spatial rather than verbal and linear. Yet each achieves a distinctive effect as a result of the linguistic techniques he uses and, more fundamentally, as a result of contrasting attitudes towards the relationship between language and object. 'Music and Memory' is 'flat' because the object of the poem has been divorced from the language of the poem, leaving behind a residuum of contextless substantives. These substantives are not *representational*; on the contrary, they are *presentational*, scraps of self-presenting language that serve no mimetic function.¹⁵ Conversely, we can think of 'Benedictio Domini' as fore-shortened precisely because it is representational; the poem establishes for the reader a post of observation (created largely by means of deictic or

'pointing' adverbs) from which the 'viewer' can perceive objects and infer the existence of other objects outside his field of vision. Put another way, the words of the Symons poem are not directed towards an object in the world; 'Her face' is only an occasion for verbalization, in a language as close to precognition as possible. In contrast, the words of the Dowson poem are orientated towards an object and its post-perceptual description, though of course our primary interest is in the relationship between the lyric voice and the object.

Twentieth-century assessments of Decadent poetic practice have ranged from the disparagement of Jerome Buckley, who refers to their 'passive gallantry of style, precious, effeminate, effete', to the praise of no less a figure than T. S. Eliot, who writes: 'From these men I got the idea that one could write poetry in an English such as one would speak oneself. A colloquial idiom.'¹⁶ What these and similar comments share is the assumption that the Decadents were practitioners of a monolithic *fin-de-siècle* style whose only characteristic worthy of note is that it differs from the style of their Victorian forebears. On the contrary, we should recognize that English Decadence was a heterogeneous poetic movement whose members devised linguistic strategies in the pursuit of a variety of aesthetic ends.

REFERENCES

¹ 'A Letter to the Editor', *The Yellow Book*, No. 2 (1894), p. 284.

² Ezra Pound, Introduction to *The Poetical Works of Lionel Johnson* (London, 1915); rpt. in *Literary Essays of Ezra Pound*, ed. T. S. Eliot (Norfolk, Conn. 1954), p. 363; Desmond Flower, Introduction to *The Poetry of Ernest Dowson*, 3rd ed. (1967; rpt. Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1970), p. 25.

³ Gautier's own comments on this volume are instructive: 'The title . . . indicates my intention to treat slight subjects within a restricted space, sometimes with the brilliant colours of enamel upon a plate of gold or copper, sometimes by using the cutter's wheel upon gems such as agate, cornelian, or onyx. Every poem was to be a medallion fit to be set in the cover of a casket, or a seal to be worn on the finger . . . But I did not intend to deny myself the pleasure of carving on the whitish or reddish layers of the gems a clean modern profile, or of dressing the hair of Parisian Greek women seen at a recent ball after the fashions of Syracusan

medals. The Alexandrine verse being too mighty for such modest ambition, I re-used the octo-syllabic verse only, which I made over, polished and chiselled with all possible care.' *The History of Romanticism*, tr. F. C. de Sumichrast, *The Works of Théophile Gautier*, The Jenson Society (Cambridge, 1902), 16, pp. 267-68.

⁴ 2nd ed., rev. (New York, 1908), p. 87.

⁵ This essay assumes that discussion of affinities among art forms can be fruitful, if pursued less from the standpoint of artistic form (is there a linguistic 'equivalent' of curlicues? how might an artist transfer the curlicues of a painting into a poem?) and more from the standpoint of either the psychology of composition (what kinds of perceptual or cognitive impulses in the artist give rise to curlicues in a painting and, alternatively,—to something else in a poem?) or audience reaction (what similar expressive properties do I perceive in the visible patterns of curlicues in a painting and some analogous pattern in a poem?). With refer-

ence to the latter, Rudolph Arnheim has given us a useful way of linking art forms in the psychology of audience response to the expressive properties of a work. He writes: 'expression is conveyed . . . by the forces [that the 'geometric-technical' properties of a percept] can be assumed to arouse in the nervous system of the observer. Regardless of whether the object moves (dancer, actor) or is immobile (painting, sculpture), it is the kind of directed tension or "movement"—its strength, place, and distribution—transmitted by the visible patterns that is perceived as expression.' See *Art and Visual Perception* (University of California Press, 1957), pp. 363–64. In Arnheim's view, the expressive function of art exists not within the artist, but within the 'perceived pattern' that the audience reacts to. A reasonable assumption to work from in studying art interrelationships is that divergent 'visible patterns' can arouse similar 'forces . . . in the nervous system of the observer'.

⁶ Donald Davie, *Articulate Energy* (London, 1955) *passim*; Howard Nemerov, 'On Poetry and Painting, With a Thought of Music', *Prose*, 3 (1971), p. 103.

⁷ *The Savage Mind* (University of Chicago Press, 1966), pp. 28–29 and note.

⁸ *Art and Visual Perception*, p. 187. Claudio Guillén, in his article 'On the Concept and Metaphor of Perspective', has given us an informative history of perspective since its 'discovery' in the Renaissance. Guillén cites six assumptions underlying the principle of perspective, assumptions which are part and parcel of the Enlightenment's scientific view of the world: painting is a mimetic fiction concerned with visual appearances; its central projection and unified space are dependent on the fiction of the single beholder, that is, on a unifying point of view; point of view is attached to a single, immobile eye; perspectives are relational; these structures, or the connection between them as seen and their representation on the surface of the canvas, can be measured and are amenable to geometrical

thinking; the most important relational structure is distance, and things are seen in depth with regard to the point of view, that is, as more or less remote from the spectator. These assumptions, we conclude, guided the hands of the 'Old Masters' to whom Arnheim refers. See *Comparatists at Work*, ed. Stephen G. Nichols and Richard B. Vowles (Waltham, Mass., 1968), pp. 33–34, from which I have loosely quoted.

⁹ Ernst Cassirer, *Mythical Thought*, tr. Ralph Mannheim, Vol. 2 of *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms* (Yale University Press, 1955), pp. 30 and 36. Later, Cassirer makes a comment that has a bearing on our understanding of Symons's use of synaesthesia: 'The linguistic term "poly-synthetic" has indeed been applied to the mythical imagination, and the term has been explained as meaning that for the mythical imagination there is no separation of a total complex into its elements, but that only a single undivided totality is represented—a totality in which there has been no "dissociation" of separate factors, particularly of the factors of objective perception and subjective feeling' (pp. 45–46).

¹⁰ *Art and Illusion: A Study in the Psychology of Pictorial Representation*, rev. ed., Bollingen Series XXXV, 5 (Princeton University Press, 1961), pp. 370 and 21. It should be noted that Gombrich's 'theory of alternatives', which gives primacy to the role of learning and experience in perception, is opposed to the view held by Arnheim and others, derived from Gestalt psychology, that there is a universal, in-born tendency to interpret percepts with particular characteristics in particular ways. In support of his view, Arnheim refers to experiments with dancers representing 'sadness', where 'the movements . . . exhibited a formal structure so strikingly similar to the intended mood'. He concludes that 'since such visual qualities as speed, shape, or direction are immediately accessible to the eye, it seems legitimate to assume that they are the carriers of an expression

directly comprehensible to the eye' (*Art and Visual Perception*, p. 363). Gombrich would counter by saying that we correctly perceive sadness in the movements of the dancer only because we recognize that these movements, rather than others, have been selected from a range of possible movements. The audience (and dancer) experiences sadness as a result of learning, which provides us with schema enabling us to sort the 'flux of impressions' (p. 88). We cannot resolve this complex issue here, other than to note that the subjectivity of perception and the sway of artistic convention are no doubt continuously adjusting one another.

¹¹ *Mythical Thought*, p. 33.

¹² Arnheim, p. 240.

¹³ Erwin Panofsky, like Guillén, discusses the development of central perspective during the Renaissance. For Panofsky, the temporal implications of visual perspective are important: 'the Renaissance inserted "historical distance" between itself and the past, as the picture does between the image and the point of vision.' In the same way, Dowson's use of the principles of the third dimension reinforce his weary sense of having been caught within the vicissitudes of time,

chance and mutability. See Panofsky's *The Life and Art of Albrecht Dürer*, 4th ed. (Princeton University Press, 1955), pp. 261 ff.

¹⁴ See Arnheim, p. 194.

¹⁵ My use of these terms is similar to Susanne K. Langer's in *Feeling and Form: A Theory of Art*, (New York, 1953). For Langer, 'Representation . . . is for the sake of creating individual forms in visible relation to one another. It makes imagination help the eye to establish virtual proportions, connections, and focal points. The suggestion of familiar objects, used in this way, is essentially a device for constructing volumes, distances, planes of vision and the space between them . . .' (p. 76). In contrast, 'presentation' is used in connection with the 'expression' of 'ideas' (p. 67) or the 'forms of human feeling' (p. 82; see also p. 379). The artist presents form, but represents an object—a view similar to the one taken by Lévi-Strauss discussed earlier.

¹⁶ Buckley, *The Victorian Temper* (Harvard University Press, 1951), p. 230; Eliot quoted by Derek Stanford, 'The Poets of the Nineties: A Note in Revision', *South Atlantic Quarterly*, Vol. 64 (1965), p. 206.

THE DOCTRINE OF REFLECTION IN SOVIET AESTHETICS

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IN *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, written in 1908, Lenin advanced the 'reflection' theory of cognition which has exercised so far-reaching an influence on Soviet philosophy. According to this theory knowledge is the reflection in human awareness of an objective reality existing independently of human consciousness and reflected by it. 'Our sensation, our consciousness,' he wrote, 'is only an image of the external world, and it is obvious that an image cannot exist without the thing imaged, and that the latter exists independently of that which images it.' Despite the tendency of modern physical science to depart more and more radically from such a crudely Realistic view of the world, this epistemology has remained a cardinal principle of Dialectical Materialism. Partly through the influence of Gorkij on Zhdanov, it was taken over into aesthetics and from the official promulgation of Socialist Realism in 1934 it has remained the theoretical criterion of officially sanctioned artistic practice in the Soviet Union, while the central problem of Theory of Art has continued to be seen as the relation of art to Reality in terms of the reflection doctrine. Soviet aesthetics thus started life with a cognitive slant, which it has not lost. It is a slant which has accorded well with the didactic function that has been demanded of Socialist Realist art.

In his essay 'L'esthétique contemporaine et ses fondements philosophiques' (1972) Mikhail Ovsiannikov, a pillar of Soviet orthodoxy, wrote as follows: 'La théorie du reflet . . . constitue le fondement méthodologique, philosophique de l'esthétique marxiste. Comme a montré l'expérience, on ne peut aujourd'hui résoudre correctement aucun problème d'esthétique sans prendre en considération les principes essentiels de la théorie léniniste de la connaissance . . . La théorie marxiste-léniniste considère l'art comme une forme de la connaissance, en tant que reflet du monde objectif sous forme spécifique d'images artistiques.' It is obvious that this conception of art is incompatible with non-iconic abstraction, and Ovsiannikov begins the earlier essay 'The Artistic Image' by decrying as a bourgeois aberration the recent tendencies towards abstraction in Western art. He writes: 'Art is incapable of renouncing imagery because imagery is its very soul, its essence and its main characteristic. Art loses its essence to the extent to which it ceases to constitute the comprehension of the real

world through artistic images. True art capable of reflecting the infinitely complex changing patterns of the modern world must be figurative.'

It may not come amiss at this point to contrast the conception of art which has become so pervasive that it may be regarded as typical of the Western outlook in this century. According to this view the aim of art is not to communicate knowledge of what exists by producing copies of reality but to enrich the possibilities of perceptual experience by creating a new reality, that is by adding to the reality which exists. This view was most forcefully expressed by André Malraux, who was not politically unsympathetic to Marxism although his outlook on the fine arts was diametrically opposed to that of Socialist Realism. Thus in *Les Voix de Silence* (1951) he could write: 'La peinture tend bien moins à voir le monde qu'à en créer un autre.' And: 'L'art naît précisément du refus de copier les spectacles; de la volonté d'arracher les formes au monde que l'homme subit pour les faire entrer dans celui qu'il gouverne.' So, although it may incidentally do these things, its function and defining characteristic as art is not to copy or to idealize reality but to transform reality. From this point of view he can speak of 'la transformation du monde en peinture' and can say: 'Le monde de l'art n'est pas un monde idéalisé, c'est un autre monde.' These two points of view are indeed opposed. On the one hand art is thought of as a way of communicating knowledge by producing reflections of reality; on the other hand its identity and justification are seen to lie in the transformation of reality by the creation of a new reality adapted specifically for the enrichment and enlargement of perceptual experience. The view represented by Malraux neither rejects nor gives primacy to abstraction, whether it be iconic abstraction, which may reduce the amount of detail in a representation beyond the point of recognizability, or non-iconic or 'gegenstandlos' art, which constructs the artistic image from non-representational elements.¹

According to the view which I have myself advocated elsewhere, and which I believe to be representative of the outlook implicit in most Western writing about the arts, appreciation of art is a cognitive process, not cognition by discursive understanding—though understanding may enter in—but by direct perception in the widest sense of that term. The object of cognition is the work of art itself. The central and essential function of art, therefore, is not to mediate knowledge about the world other than itself but to provide new material for the exercise of richer and expanded perceptual activity.

Be this as it may, the central importance assigned to the cognitive function of art in Soviet aesthetic thinking invited, or indeed necessitated, a comparison with science. As forms of social consciousness, according to Marxist doctrine, both are historically conditioned, shaped and determined by the social structure within which they arise and flourish, particularly the

social arrangements for the distribution of labour and production. Both purvey knowledge. But whereas science works by concepts, aspiring to discover the universal and necessary laws governing reality and the course of events, art imparts knowledge by means of concrete and typical images faithfully reflecting reality.² But it is clear that this is as yet no more than the skeleton of a practical system of aesthetics adequate to bolster a state-controlled art production geared for indoctrination in support of Party policies. If this indeed is all, what is the need for art and what function does it serve? As the Polish aesthetician Władisław Tatarkiewicz once asked, given science and given reality itself (and, we might add, a camera) why do we need a further reflection of reality in images? The ways in which this skeleton have been fleshed out and the basic doctrine amplified or, as I think, modified, have given rise to many different schools of thought; but underlying dispute and controversy the following points seem to be standard. Most of them are mentioned, though not fully argued, in the essays by Ovsiannikov referred to above.

1. The special object of cognition through art is man as a social being, a line of thought which was initiated by A. I. Burov in the 1950s. 'The specific object of art is human life, more exactly, social consciousness in a living unity of the social and the personal, in the unity which is proper to man according to his objective human essence.'³ The argument is that art, like science, is a form of social consciousness; all social consciousness reflects social man; therefore art reflects social man. Unfortunately, the argument does not serve to differentiate art from science; but it does indicate the direction in which aesthetic thinking was proceeding. So in his essay 'The Theory of Reflection and the Arts' E. I. Savostyanov writes: 'But the main object of art is not technology but man, his intellect and mental world It is like a sensitive mirror which reflects social psychology and its development.'

2. But the artist himself is a member of some society; his social consciousness is socially and historically conditioned. So a way is opened for subjective interpretation, self-revelation and self-expression. Claiming Hegel as his authority, Savostyanov explains that although in landscape painting, still lifes, etc., artists have always presented non-human subjects, the 'real substance' of all these works 'is not these objects themselves, but an individual artist's vivacity and commitment, his emotions, which are reflected in the work and present not just as a simple superficial copy of the objects but at the same time reveal his inner world.' Therefore: 'It goes without saying that the artistic image is not a mirror reflection or photographic reproduction of the facts and phenomena of reality The artist transforms the material taken from life in accordance with his class world-outlook and understanding of the laws governing objective reality.'

Ovsiannikov also contrasts the photograph with the artistic image on the

ground that subjectivity is an essential ingredient of the latter. A photograph is not an artistic image because 'the artistic image is a *subjective* image of the objective world The photograph or essay may be said to approach the artistic image to the extent that they embody a subjective approach on the part of the photographer or writer. Without this subjective element the artistic image does not exist, otherwise we should have to regard any photograph as a work of art.'

We have here the first serious modification of the reflection theory, which surely borders upon a contradiction. We have been told that art, like all knowledge, is a reflection of reality. Its aim is truth and the criterion of truth is the correspondence of the reflection with the objective reality reflected. 'La théorie marxiste-léniniste considère l'art comme une forme de la connaissance, en tant que reflet du monde objectif sous forme spécifique d'images artistiques Mais toute la question est là: ce reflet est-il fidèle ou non?'²⁴ Now we are told that the artistic image is not a mirror image. Subjectivity is essential and therefore the image may be distorted 'comme le prove les formes religieuses de la conscience ou l'art décadent.' What, then, is now the criterion of truth? We are told that this is provided by the doctrine of reflection. 'La théorie léniniste du reflet fournit le critère à l'aide duquel on peut déterminer l'objectivité, la fidélité du reflet.' But a theory which asserts simply that artistic truth (la vérité artistique) consists in faithful reflection does not of itself allow for subjectivity or provide a criterion for deciding which subjective 'transformation' is 'true' and which is false. Some attempt to bridge the gulf is offered by a theory of the typical. Artistic truth, we are told, 'consiste non à reproduire fidèlement des faits et des phénomènes isolés, mais à représenter le typique.' But who shall decide which subjectively conditioned reflection is more typical than another? The most significant sentence is the following: 'Pour toutes les formes de la conscience sociale le critère principal, déterminant est la pratique socio-historique.' The ultimate criterion of truth is Marxist social practice—and the verdict on this is given, of course, by the voice of the Party.

3. I come now to an even more radical modification of the original reflection doctrine. Art not only purveys knowledge by reflecting existing reality but works for the changing and refashioning of reality. This extension of the doctrine is found in one form or another in almost every writer on Soviet aesthetics. Ovsianikov quotes the authority of Lenin for the view that although 'art is a specific form of the reflection of reality', it is not 'a dead mirror passively reflecting the real world' but exerts an influence to change the course of existing reality in a desirable direction. 'In his apprehension of reality man strives constantly to influence the course of its development.' And 'seen in the light of the Marxist-Leninist theory of reflection, aesthetic feelings, tastes, ideals, theories of art, etc., are all differ-

ent forms of the mastery of reality.' In an essay 'The Practical Effectiveness of Art' S. Kh. Rappoport appeals to the doctrine of Marx and Engels that society's diverse activities are directed not only to 'the changing of nature by people'—that is improving the means to produce material goods—but to 'the changing of people by people'. Basing himself on Lenin, he claims that this changing of reality 'leads to the formation of new or the modification of existing attitudes of man to reality . . .'. Society 'needs to influence the majority of people in an organised, purposeful way, based on an understanding of socio-historical experience'. Art contributes to this 'changing of people' by 'imitating life'. This means that 'it creates working models of life, capable of bringing about changes in man similar to those in life, that is, of drawing him into events, observations, emotions and reflections analogous with those in life, in order to bring him . . . to certain conclusions, and to make him directly endure the thus acquired experience and imbibe it into the depths of his personality. . . . As a result of this, art exerts an influence not only on some particular attitude, but rather on the basis of man's attitudes, on the nucleus of the human personality, and it is felt not directly, but indirectly, and in various situations and at various stages of life'. If we ask what type of person does art aim to mould, we are told that this depends on whether the values it affirms are those 'expressed in the social ideals of progressive classes, in revolutionary ideas; or in the ideas and aspirations of reactionary forces'. Here, of course, 'art borders on ideology'.

In his essay 'Die leninsche Theorie der Widerspiegelung und das künstlerische Schaffen' K. Dolgov repeats the steps which we have outlined. 'As a form of social consciousness art reflects the real world, which exists independently of human consciousness. According to Marxist-Leninist epistemology the object and the methods of reflection are determined and conditioned by the level of production and culture already reached.' Since human knowledge of reality comes through the individual subject it necessarily has a finite, subjective character and follows subjective aims. But the work of art has also an 'ideal' existence. The artist not only reproduces the object but also creates it. (*Das Subjekt reproduziert nicht nur das Objekt, sondern schafft es auch.*) This finds its expression both in the fact that the artist creates objects and appearances which did not before exist in nature and in the fact that he transforms existing objects according to the laws of beauty. Dolgov appeals to a saying of Lenin: 'Das Bewusstsein des Menschen widerspiegelt nicht nur die objektive Welt, sondern schafft sie auch'. Therefore 'the reflection of objective reality in art, as in science, has an ideal character. So it would be wrong to understand the process of reflection as something passive, dead; on the contrary, through man's creative consciousness the reflection of reality has an active,

transforming character'. This is summed up in the essay 'La Création artistique et la théorie léniniste du reflet': 'À la fois forme de la conscience sociale et forme d'activité humaine, l'art reflète la réalité, aide l'homme à accéder à la connaissance de celle-ci, à la modifier conformément aux lois de l'esthétique'.

From the simple doctrine of reflection, not specifically applied by Lenin to the arts—the doctrine that the artistic image reflects objective reality with the aim of truth and the criterion of fidelity—we have seen amplifications first in the doctrine that the proper subject of art is man in his social capacity, then in the doctrine that artistic reflection must be subjectively expressive, then in the doctrine that it transforms existing reality creatively with the purpose of exerting an influence on the course of social reality. In some formulations the subjective aspect assigned to artistic reflection of reality approaches the theory of self-expression once popular in the West. The doctrine of creative transformation could be developed in the direction of the outlook formulated by Malraux, but it is in fact kept within the bounds of Marxist political theory and justifies the idealization of Marxist society which has been a major theme of Socialist Realist art.

The main difficulty of coming to terms with this literature lies in the fact that so many apparently conflicting doctrines, or versions, are constantly asserted in the same essay, or even on the same page, with no serious attempt at reconciliation. In an essay entitled 'The Epistemological Limits of the Creative Interpretation of Reality in Art' A. F. Eremeyev writes: 'Marxist-Leninist aesthetics opposes both the rejection of the role of creativity in the production of a work of art (naturalism) and the absolutisation of the creative element, ignoring the reflective possibilities and aims of art. Modern Marxist scholars express divergent points of view as regards the essential features of art. Some postulate that the essence of art lies in the sphere of working out the ideals and values of the individual, others see art as a special form of activity or as a universal equivalent of human work in general, a third group regards it as a means to bring the future closer through experience, a fourth school of thought sees it as a culturological phenomenon with specific and non-specific functions, yet others describe art as a special kind of language, a unique communicative system, and so on. . . . But at the same time, all Marxist aestheticists are united in the conviction that art is a form of social consciousness, that it is oriented towards cognising objective reality and transforming it with humanistic aims, that it is capable of giving a faithful picture of life, and that socialist realism provides the artist with the broadest possibilities for this.' The idea that the major function of the fine arts is to furnish material for enriching the possibilities of aesthetic experience has not become integral to Soviet aesthetic thought.

REFERENCES

- ¹ In an essay 'Zum gnoselogischen Wesen des Abbildes' (1976) E. Bassin recognizes that even the reproduction permits of various degrees of abstraction and then declares: 'Was aber die Werke der sogenannten abstrakten Malerei betrifft, so enthalten sie meistens überhaupt keine Abbilder in der eigentlichen Bedeutung dieses Terminus. Denn in der abstrakten Malerei wird gerade die sichtbare Form des Gegenstandes zur höchsten Abstraktion geführt.' But in the Suprematism of Malevich, the Corner Reliefs of Tatlin, and the corresponding western European movements, the Neo-Plasticism of Mondrian and 'Geometrical Abstraction' generally, the picture is not abstracted from a natural scene or object but built up from non-representational elements. This kind of art is 'gegenstandlos' in contrast with the kind of abstraction practised by the followers of Bissière in France and the 'Objective Abstractionists' of the 1930s in England, who did in fact abstract from natural objects and scenes until the object became in many cases unrecognizable. The difference between 'iconic' and 'non-iconic' abstraction is explained in my book *Abstraction and Artifice in Twentieth-Century Art* (1979).
- ² Western aestheticians who have given prominence to the cognitive function of art would not disagree with this in principle. Thus, though he works with a more sophisticated idea of understanding and holds that the furtherance of understanding is only one of the basic aims of art as a social institution, Anthony Savile makes a similar point in *The Test of Time* (1982), particularly chapter 7.
- ³ Quoted by Swiderski (see below), p. 134.
- ⁴ The quotations in this paragraph are from Ovsiannikov, 'L'esthétique contemporaine et ses fondements philosophiques' (see below).
- For readers who do not know Russian the following may be useful. (The essays referred to in the text are from these collections.)
- Problems of Modern Aesthetics*, ed. Prof. S. Mozhnyagin (1969). Engl. trans. Progress Publishers, Moscow.
- Especially 'The Artistic Image' by Mikhail Ovsiannikov and 'Realism and its Historical Development' by Boris Suchkov.
- Esthétique marxiste et actualité*, collection prepared under the authority of the Department of Aesthetics of the Institute of Philosophy and the Academy of Sciences in the U.S.S.R. (1972). French trans. Progress Publishers, Moscow.
- Especially 'L'esthétique contemporaine et ses fondements philosophiques' by M. Ovsiannikov and 'La création artistique et la théorie léniniste du reflet' by K. Dolgov.
- Marxistisch-leninistische Ästhetik* by a writers' Collective under the leadership of Mikhail Ovsiannikov. Published by Moscow University, 1973. German trans. Dietz Verlag, Berlin, 1976.
- Marxistisch-Leninistische Ästhetik und das Leben*, by a writers' Collective under the leadership of I. Kulikova and A. Sis. German Transl. Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1976.
- Especially 'Die Leninische Theorie der Widerspiegelung und das künstlerische Schaffen' by K. Dolgov.
- Marxist-Leninist Aesthetics and the Arts*. Engl. transl. Progress Publishers, 1980.
- Especially 'The Theory of Reflection and the Arts' by E. I. Savostyanov and 'Anticipatory Reflection and Art' by N. L. Leizerov.
- Las ideas estéticas de Marx* by Adolfo Sánchez Vázquez. Ediciones ERA, S. A., Mexico. 1965.
- The Philosophical Foundations of Soviet Aesthetics* by Edward M. Swiderski, Reidel Publishing Company, Dordrecht, 1979.

BOOK REVIEWS

The Test of Time. An Essay in Philosophical Aesthetics. By ANTHONY SAVILE. Clarendon Press, Oxford. 1982. pp. 319.

THIS is a serious, informed, sensitive and humane book, and readers of this journal will enjoy, and profit from, studying it. The issues that Savile discusses, and his reflections on them, are of great interest, but for three related reasons his book is unlikely to appeal to a general audience.

Savile explicitly adopts what he calls a 'dialectical' method of discussion, partly because he holds that precision in philosophical theory can be reached only slowly and by gradual refinement, and partly because he wants his readers to appreciate the nature and force of rival views. One danger of the method, to which Savile succumbs, and the first flaw in the presentation, is self-indulgence; too often the discussion lacks either focus or impetus, and what superficially appears as a simulated dialogue turns out to be a monologue in which the fundamental requirements of a dialogue are set at nought. Secondly, the notes are inadequate to all except the *cognoscenti* and offer almost no guidance to someone unfamiliar with the issues raised; moreover there is no index—the 'Analytical Table of Contents' amounts to little more than a list of section headings—and it is virtually impossible to trace one's favourite passages. Thirdly, Savile's examples readily invite the accusation of snobbery from all save those readers who share his tastes, and are so perfunctorily alluded to that they can function only as vague gestures. The previously published articles which make up about half of the book will be familiar to diligent students of aesthetics, and the disparate sources of his discussions partly explains an unevenness in style and tempo throughout the book. Savile can write with

elegance, precision and wit; one's frustration is all the greater when he doesn't.

Many eighteenth-century writers held that 'the test of time' was a sure criterion of value in art. Savile's aim is to show that, suitably amplified, such a view is tenable. The first third of the book is devoted to the issues of interpretation and understanding. Savile holds that art is not detachable from its historical origins, and that if we fail to follow an artist in his thought, fail to grasp the problems and choices he confronts, our understanding of his work is thwarted. Works of art are patronized by, and thus prepared for, contemporaries, and a satisfactory theory of interpretation must allow for their full understanding of those works; accordingly, a work can be justifiably judged only by the standards by which it was made. Savile admits, of course, that tastes change; our sense of the past also changes, along with our attitudes towards it, but these considerations do not threaten what he calls his 'historicist' position. Nor is that position challenged by the undeniable fact that interpretations of particular works change over time, or by the view, which Savile accepts, that interpretation is a case of aspect-perception and hence involves an element of freedom. On the contrary, Savile claims that stability of interpretation is necessary for art to survive, and that in the ideal case indeterminacy in interpretation will not arise. One assumption beneath these claims, not discussed in any detail, is that art is a mode of communication; accordingly, in order to determine the criteria of understanding in a given case it is necessary to know the rules and conventions available to both an artist and his audience as conditions of communication between them. Savile formulates his main thesis in this way: a proper understanding and

appreciation of a work of art, at no matter what period, must go through some canonical interpretation which does not change over time. The canonical interpretation must be taken as that which the author 'intended' it to receive, where 'intention' is itself glossed as 'the best available contemporary reading of the signs'.

Savile emphasizes that although the *ideal* is defined as the 'best available contemporary reading', we may often not know what that reading is, and it is contingent whether any actual contemporary of a particular artist achieves it. Savile adds that, in a similar manner, we have no guarantee that our hypotheses for understanding our contemporaries in conversation are the best—this sceptical anxiety echoes Collingwood, of course, although rather surprisingly his name appears nowhere in the book. Savile concedes that historical understanding of art is generally more difficult as time passes, but it seems to be the absence of a guarantee, even in the present, that forces him to conclude: 'understanding is always a matter of degree' (125).

Like the earlier writers who resurrected the notion of the test of time, Savile himself appeals to 'qualified observers'. Indeed, he holds that where the interpretation of a given work is not stable or canonical, we need to use agreement in judgement as evidence of stability, and only then as evidence of the judgement's truth. Understanding and appreciation are inseparable from one another and, as a general rule, 'we have to think of ourselves as aiming at transparent understanding and as adopting it as the model of understanding on which appreciation is based' (247). The transparency of understanding has to be linked, however, to the notion of embeddedness: 'embedded art is that which plays an organizing role in a true account of our culture and of our conception of it' (248).

It would be quite unfair to omit mention of the chapters on 'Depth', 'Beauty', 'Excellence and Stature', 'Sentimentality, Vulgarity, and Obscenity'; as Savile remarks in the Introduction, one can assess these reflections independently of the main theme, and

although they are sometimes laboured the discussions contain much of value, including suggestions on the main virtues of the arts as repositories of understanding. There are particularly interesting remarks in Chapter 6 on obstacles to historical understanding, during the course of which Savile usefully distinguishes loss by displacement, loss by disturbance and loss of naturalness.

At one point Savile states that 'the persistence of the institution of art as well as its genesis supposes that we see the arts as necessarily aiming to elaborate thought of a sort to which we attach common public importance' (204). Emphasis on communication, and on the understanding associated with it, seems to push Savile towards an excessively cognitive conception of art, with literature as the implicit model— notwithstanding allusions to paintings. As a result, less than justice is done to those arts, particularly the performing arts, which encouraged the view that some art forms allowed for, or even generated, varied, non-definitive but equally appropriate interpretations. Before the second half of the eighteenth century no one explicitly linked the notions of interpretation and understanding with that of art; it is unclear whether Savile holds earlier generations to have been without a concept of art, or whether he takes their conception to have been seriously impoverished. Many readers, indeed, will puzzle over the applicability of Savile's main thesis to the varied products of the past, and from different cultures, which we value as art—Anasazi baskets, Shang bronzes, Babur's gardens at Agra. Savile insists that he is concerned with an ideal, and not with practical difficulties which, rather strangely, he dismisses to the inferior domain of epistemology; at one point he disclaims any interest in 'extended forays into criticism' (144). But the absence of a single sustained example of a 'canonical interpretation' leaves the notion empty; moreover, it leaves a gaping hole in his notion of 'understanding', because we simply do not know what he counts as understanding in a given case. Many readers, including those who assign a degree of

autonomy to interpretation, will accept the view that, for the purposes of determining a man's responsibilities for what happens, and his links with the world, we need to know how he views himself and his actions—we need to know what he regards as his actions. But Savile goes much further than this in his account of art.

The historicism Savile argues for in understanding art he conspicuously avoids in his own interpretations of other philosophers; and that reveals something about his conceptions of each. Kant's views on beauty are barely recognizable in the gloss offered here, and Hume's not at all. I noted some 20 printing errors, of no significance, in the main body of the text, but Savile is rather careless over details; Meyer Schapiro's name is mis-spelt throughout the book, and Hume and Burke, respectively, are falsely credited with works entitled *Essay on the Standard of Taste*, and *Essay on the Sublime and the Beautiful*.

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Esthetics of Music. By CARL DAHLHAUS.

Translated by WILLIAM W. AUSTIN. Cambridge University Press. 1982. pp. 115. £9.95.

ANYBODY CONCERNED with music who doubts whether philosophical aesthetics has any worthwhile insights to give might with benefit turn to this short book which in a mere hundred pages provides a weighty introduction to musical aesthetics. The author combines musicological erudition with philosophical discernment and conveys the complexity of his subject-matter through presenting the *pro* and *contra* of aesthetic problems without false simplification. Written by a German musicologist imbued with the German tradition in aesthetic philosophy, the book offers an additional bonus to the Anglo-Saxon reader in acquainting him with many important contributions made by German thinkers in the field.

Professor Dahlhaus's book was first published in German in 1967. By converting the author's long original sentences into combinations of separate sentences, the

translator of the present edition has reduced the difficulty for the English reader without losing the individual quality of Dahlhaus's style. The English edition contains an additional preface by the author, an introduction by the translator and a selective bibliography.

In drawing attention to the wayward development of aesthetics into a unified subject, Dahlhaus paradoxically asserts that 'the system of aesthetics is its history' (p. 3). In spite of this emphasis on the historical character of aesthetics he wisely refrains from using his restricted space for describing the consecutive periods of aesthetic thought and turns rather to the more profitable task of discussing in each chapter a major aesthetic problem such as formalism, standards of criticism, aesthetics of emotion, programme music and many others. In his selection of problems the author does not distinguish between problems peculiar to music and problems appertaining to all the arts.

Dahlhaus begins his book with a quotation from Arnold Schoenberg's *Theory of Harmony* in which the composer announces his aim to replace 'a bad aesthetics' by 'a good theory of craftsmanship' (p. 1). This could be read as if aesthetics could not be anything else but bad, but Schoenberg probably wanted to dismiss only the then reigning aesthetics of 'the beautiful in music' under the cover of which contemporary critics tried to exclude certain new works from the range of acceptable compositions. Dahlhaus links Schoenberg's remark with reflections on the antithesis between aesthetic and technical considerations. This is just one example of the author's successful method to use relevant quotations from aestheticians and musicians at the head of each chapter to lead into a stimulating discussion of a specific problem.

Dahlhaus stresses the importance of perceiving structural wholes in aesthetic experience, but maintains that 'the thesis of the primacy of the whole was developed with reference to spatial structures' (p. 7). In expressing doubts whether acoustic processes lend themselves to this thesis, he over-

looks that, as well in the seminal article 'On "Gestalt qualities"' by Christian von Ehrenfels as in the programmatic lecture 'Gestalt Theory' by Max Wertheimer, the phenomenon of the musical melody was used as the major example of a Gestalt.

Against a modern tendency in practitioners of music to disdain all endeavours of aesthetic philosophy the author rightly points out that 'in the everyday patterns of conduct that determine musical activities, "aesthetics of music" is constantly at work, even if without such constant reflecting about it' (p. VII). This means that the issues of musical aesthetics can in any case not be shirked.

As to another modern tendency to consider aesthetic thought as historically and sociologically conditioned and therefore deprived of objective validity, Dahlhaus's attitude is not quite clear-cut. In the author's description 'music aesthetics represents . . . the spirit of cultivated bourgeois music lovers, a spirit that arose in the eighteenth century and is threatened in the twentieth with collapse' (p. VII). Although he stresses the enduring relevance of this nineteenth-century thought as long as the repertory of concerts and opera comes mainly from the same period, he omits to make the obvious point that the truth or falsity of aesthetic thought in any case does not depend on when it was uttered or by whom. However, when actually discussing views developed in that period, he argues in fact strictly about their intrinsic merit regardless of their origin.

Dahlhaus tries to counter objections to the aesthetic enterprise by disavowing any normative ambitions: 'Music aesthetics . . . does not prescribe how anyone should think, but rather explains how thinking has gone on in the course of the centuries' (p. VIII). The overmodesty of this claim does not take sufficient account of the scope of musical aesthetics which comprises not only music criticism—leading to what the author calls 'aesthetic decision-making'—but also reflections on the fundamental aesthetic problems of music. The aim to arrive at a valid body of philosophical thought about

the phenomenon of music is certainly still being pursued in the present and also in this book.

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The Power of the Center: A Study of Composition in the Visual Arts. By RUDOLF ARNHEIM. University of California Press. 1982. pp. 239. Paperbound, £6.75.

RUDOLF ARNHEIM in *The Power of the Center* sets out clearly in his introduction the point of this book. It 'undertakes to describe principles by which the shapes of painting, sculpture and architecture are organised, but only to show that in each case the visible pattern represents a symbolic statement about the human condition. In this sense it is a book of interpretations—though not interpretations in the sense of iconographic detective work. My point of departure', he writes, 'is not subject matter, although subject matter, wherever it is offered, must be considered with care. Nor am I trying to discover circles, rectangles, or diagonals by which to reduce intuitively invented forms to a blandly pleasing geometry. My work is based on the assumption that the most powerful conveyor of meaning is the immediate impact of perceptual form. And it is this import that distinguishes art from other kinds of communication'.

Arnheim selects two ways of analysing the perceptual process with regard to art; the concentric, where the circle is seen as the regulating form, and the 'Cartesian grid' where the compositional form is based upon the rectilinear intersection of parallel vertical and horizontal lines. Noting that each on its own is insufficient to contain the full range of his response to visual form he combines the two and the resulting concept of the circle and the grid provides him with the key to 'spatial organisation in the arts'. The purpose of this book is to test this approach to the analysis of art on 'professionals and experts, artists and theorists, and especially the general reader'.

At the outset Arnheim acknowledges that *The Power of the Center* takes off from his earlier and better known book *Art and Visual Perception*; but whereas in this earlier

book his findings were sustained by psychological experiment owing much in particular to gestalt psychology, this book is much more a record of a personal attempt to find meaning in art according to a simplifying analytical method. The question that Arnheim poses to the reader is, is this method revealing, does it help in making sense of art?

Testing his method against one of the paintings he discusses, Titian's *Noli Me Tangere* in the National Gallery, certain doubts about the claims Arnheim makes for the immediate impact of perceptual form as the most powerful conveyor of meaning are raised. Of this painting Arnheim writes, 'Titian's painting can serve as a prime example of the particular nature of a great artist's intelligence. It is an intelligence that manifests itself in the pictorial medium. It dispenses with verbal language but incarnates ideas through the symbolic meaning of shape and colour deployed in space. A mature, powerful and subtle interpretation of the biblical episode, its intertwining of religious and human aspects, is achieved and conveyed by visual thinking of the highest order in no way inferior to the abstract reasoning of the intellect' (p. 114).

In this passage Arnheim is clearly assessing the appropriateness of Titian's depiction of Mary Magdalene's meeting with the dead Christ against what he knows of the biblical story; how autonomous, therefore, are the perceptual responses he goes on to describe? '[Christ's] body reacts to the woman's advance by the concavity of withdrawal—but that inclination has all the ambivalence of a diagonal: when read downward, it makes Christ recoil from the touch, when read upwards, it makes him bend protectively to receive the woman'.

Could we recreate the story from an analysis of our perceptual responses alone? Clearly not, yet unless we dismiss all contextual and specific knowledge of works of art as irrelevant to aesthetic appreciation, the balance of Arnheim's argument, apart from its conclusions, must be open to question.

The major question which *The Power of*

the Center raises is thus how we come to an understanding of art and in particular how in art meaning is communicated. In taking one view, centred on the psychology of perception, Arnheim provokes a whole range of questions, not least concerning the status of the visual as a vehicle for meaning in art. How much of our understanding of art, however, is dependent upon non-visual sources of information? The whole of the abstract movement attests to the belief that the non-visual has little to do with art but in so far as works of art in this style mean anything it would seem that they depend more than Arnheim would seem to accept upon, at least, a degree of prior contextual knowledge on the part of the spectator.

This is a provocative book both in its restatement of a theme which can now be seen to have historical significance in the philosophy of art and in its reopening of the argument about the relevance of scientific enquiry to our appreciation of art.

PHILIP MEESON

Brighton Polytechnic

Nature and Art as needs of the mind. Fourth Leverhulme Memorial Lecture. By ERNST GOMBRICH. Liverpool University Press. 1981. pp. 24. 75p.

THE FIRST point to note is that this lecture is not concerned with the 'exceptional creators in art and in science' but with the 'minds of men in general'. It starts in fact from the basic need of mind to possess a language not only to communicate with but to make connections between the phenomena of 'this elusive world of ours'. As an instance of this Sir Ernst aptly cites Lord Leverhulme's famous soap which had the metaphor 'Sunlight' annexed to it: in this way it was 'put into a parcel together with other things bright and beautiful and made to share their label'. By means of metaphor the mind orders experience: 'since nature and art are among the richest sources of metaphor, they answer the needs of the mind'.

With this vivid example of metaphor in action Sir Ernst opens the door for us to consider man's need for art as part of his need for ordering experience. The term

'art', besides denoting objects made by artists, also stands for this process of making links between man-made objects and the world of nature. Bacon's dictum 'art is man added to nature' seems to reflect this. As for 'nature', we are not required to grapple here with the term for which Lovejoy found over sixty meanings: we are concerned with landscape and the world of forms not made by man. To judge from the booming membership lists of rambling and wildlife clubs, to which Gombrich refers, the twentieth-century city-dweller, the man in the all-too-insistent street, sees nature as the answer to a desire to 'get away from it all'. The desire is of course not new: it is discoverable in the Upanishads. And it has long and deeper implications. One of the many enjoyable references to the author's personal experience in this lecture is that which tells of his encounter in Japan with the living symbolism of cherry blossom among the festival crowds celebrating the return of spring.

For our Western human figure-orientated classical civilization nature has been seen as a world to be regulated, but also as a vehicle of release from man-made rules. Rousseau recommended that the child be taken into the countryside and that a desire for a map should grow from his experience of it (Rousseau saw the need for the map). Lord Leverhulme, whose benefactions in the form of the garden village of Port Sunlight and its splendid art collection the lecture under review commemorates, was a firm believer in education, but his view of it had a Rousseauist streak—Gombrich quotes him: 'A child that knows nothing of God's earth, of green fields, or sparkling brooks, of breezy hill and springy heath, and whose mind is stored with none of the beauties of nature . . . cannot be benefited by education'.

All men, given the encouragement, respond to nature: the artist, possessed of a desire to give form to the flux of experience, responds in a very special way. Many of those who have been sensitive to art have also responded in a special way. Having cited the *Tale of Genji*, Shakespeare, Shaftesbury, Winckelmann, Hazlitt and other

sources Gombrich turns to the view of Goethe and his disciples who looked towards *Bildung* or 'culture' and a daily communion with nature and art as 'the equivalent of daily prayers'. Not the least moving part of the lecture are the pages concerned with the author's personal exposure to this tradition in his early years at Vienna in the course of family excursions to museums or the countryside. Gombrich makes no claims for the universal validity of the tradition and is the first to admit its shortcomings, 'but what I am trying to convey is that at least there was a map'. As a historian he reacts against the emotional equation: art, a complex human activity, demands to be understood in a way that a tree does not. Nevertheless, the tradition of *Bildung* offered glimpses of two worlds, the rhythms and regularities of nature and an equally ordered cosmos that was art.

In the last part of the lecture Sir Ernst turns to the fortunes of nature and art as needs in the twentieth century. As regards the former there are, as he points out, favourable indications: we live in an age of enthusiasm for hill-walking and of lively interest in such organizations as the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.

As regards the modern world's need for art the situation is not so reassuring. Having instanced the old prevalence of 'group security' in those attending spectator sports, Gombrich identifies an element that is new and destructive, namely that 'the inarticulate have found highly articulate spokesmen who denounce civilized values as privilege in disguise'. We have here the old *bête noire* of élitism, and the failure of anti-élitists to accept that excellence means infinitely more than superiority. Other bedevilling factors which Gombrich notes are those of overstimulation by exhibitions and the media and a competitive clamouring for attention that is enforced on living artists. He is surely right in saying that this may at worst barely do justice to the artists concerned. And beyond all this there remain the shortcomings of education in an age of decline of concern for the needs of the mind (in spite

of all the talk about the value of our 'heritage'). On the credit side, he continues, is the fact that art history is now a school subject increasingly taken for O and A levels. But as there is a widespread prejudice against general surveys, its teaching is usually broken up into 'examinable chunks'. Here the author of *The Story of Art* asserts his belief in the general grounding provided by the vanished tradition of his youth. As the mind more often proceeds, he believes, from the general to the particular, that tradition still has something to offer 'to growing minds if only the schools could be made to see it'.

But has the tradition vanished? Gombrich concludes by relating an encounter with a ranger in the National Park of the Grand Canyon. This man lived in a caravan full of art books and records of Beethoven to whose work he had been introduced long before in Alaska by a Viennese refugee violinist. He had taught art and music in a school to the delight of his pupils until parents had complained he was wasting the children's time on subjects that were not needed for examinations. With this story of a man living close to nature of a particularly majestic kind and unexpectedly close to art, both of them satisfying essential needs for him, Gombrich ends, seeing in this chance sowing of a seed in a receptive mind the 'kind of miracle which vindicates the faith in civilization'.

The lecture leaves us reflecting, will the image of twentieth-century man's relation to art and nature be seen to be of this kind, or will it appear rather as something far more precarious, the garden banished to the skyscraper roof? Art in our century has reached a curiously ambiguous stage in its long relation to nature. Here we find the imaginative enhancings of natural landscape of a Robert Smithson, there the prodigal effrontery of the 'Land Artist' who covers mountains and coastlines with synthetic fabrics. Much 'Land Art' is evidently a side-effect of a larger anxiety. For the first time, as man uses up nature's resources, she no longer appears the inexhaustible continuum into which he can discharge his desire for

refreshment. As he flies over the Brazilian rain-forest before attacking it with his tree-cutters he trivializes as he domesticates. Sir Ernst's closing story is worth the telling.

JOHN SWEETMAN

University of Southampton

Théophile Gautier: A Romantic Critic of the Visual Arts. By ROBERT SNELL. Clarendon Press, Oxford. 1982. pp. 273 + 12 illustrations. £15.00.

THÉOPHILE GAUTIER is remembered best as the great advocate of that Romantic principle, *l'art pour l'art*, expressed most forcefully in the preface of his novel *Mademoiselle de Maupin* (1834). In all his writing Gautier maintained that the aesthetic value of art was devalued when associated with utility. Enjoyment, for him, was the aim of life and the only useful thing in the world. Gautier thought of himself primarily as a poet and it is as such that he wished to be remembered, but necessity compelled him to earn his living as a journalist, an occupation which he disdained as consuming time which he could better devote to more creative writing and as pandering to particular needs. But, despite his dislike of his profession, he was the most influential art critic in France at a time when his contemporaries included Baudelaire and Fromentin.

To a considerable extent Gautier emerges from Snell's book as an artist imprisoned by his romanticism and partly frustrated by his own performance as a creative writer (poet). Despite his apparent efforts to adapt to change, his ideals were rigid; and at a time of revolution and quickening social change he was the culminating representative of a past age. Throughout his career as a journalist Gautier saw the critic's task as being a search for beauty rather than faults. 'We are a poet', he wrote (p. 47), 'not a schoolmaster'. For him art elevated the human spirit and released one from 'the coarse reality of things' (p. 52). Thus Gautier's romantic view of the artist evolved into a general critical theory about the nature of art in which the classical tradition of the Greeks was the source of all inspiration. Empathy was both Gautier's

greatest strength and weakness, and his writing was richest when he could identify with the artist's views. This was especially the case with Delacroix whose work he approached not merely as a critic but as one artist addressing another and where his resulting critiques became 'prose improvisations' of Delacroix's originals. But to twentieth-century readers his criticism is too descriptive and lacks the rigorous thrust of balanced judgement. Consequently his criticism is mainly of interest to us as an art-historical record of nineteenth-century Salons and official patronage. The world of journalism into which Gautier launched himself when he joined *La Presse* in 1836 was a new world for which, through his regular *feuilletons*, he created a tradition of critical appreciation. It was a world which reflected the new middle class need for popular journalism and Snell gives us an interesting insight into the workings of the French Press in the 1830s and '40s. *La Presse* was the first newspaper in France to assume the role of popular dispenser of culture; it introduced the serial novel, so enhancing the career of Balzac and others; and it established Gautier as a household name.

This book is rigorously structured and put together. It is written with the utmost economy and with no trace of irrelevancies and reflects, as the author tells us, its origin as a doctoral thesis. It is very much a book for the specialist reader, the discussion throughout being intricately woven so that very close reading is necessary in order to follow the argument. The book is arranged thematically and includes a brief biographical note on Gautier, with chapters on his philosophy as a critic, his treatment of the work of Delacroix, Ingres and other leading artists of the time, and his development as a critic up to 1848 and from 1848-72. The conclusion assesses his historical contribution to art criticism. The discussion within each chapter is developed chronologically so that throughout the book there is considerable movement backwards and forwards in time: this requires careful concentration from the reader. Many of the passages of Gautier's criticism, which Snell has conven-

iently translated into English, are quoted in the original French in an appendix, and the use of footnotes is, as one would expect in such a work, copious. Throughout the book the emphasis is placed on Gautier's development as a critic till 1848 after which time he became increasingly disillusioned with changes in both art and society. His criticism thereafter became more like propaganda, the expression of his real opinions grew increasingly obscure, and he had increasing difficulty in coming to terms firstly with the art of Courbet and secondly with Impressionism.

Although Snell is concerned only with Gautier as a critic of the visual arts the general reader might wish to know more than we are told here about his other critical writings, notably his theatrical criticism and his travel books. Such a reader might legitimately also wish to see Gautier in a broader social and political context. Perhaps the book is a little too esoteric to appeal to more than a limited readership although the final chapters show Gautier in the context of his contemporaries. For a book of this price we could also expect a few more illustrations, especially of the more important works discussed by Gautier. But these are slight reproaches on an otherwise excellent book and despite our criticisms just mentioned Snell does convey something of the colour and atmosphere in Parisian society during the mid-nineteenth century years of revolution and social change. He also gives us some delightful insights into Gautier's enjoyment before a work of art: the connoisseur of painting, the latter wrote in 1836, 'sees through to a thousand little interior beauties of which he enjoys exclusive possession; he revels in the inner beauty of the picture' (p. 126).

BRIAN KENNEDY

Ulster Museum

Violet Tengberg: Paintings, Drawings, Graphics and Poems. Essays by TEDDY BRUNTIUS and BENKT-ERIK BENKTSON. Gumperts Universitätsbókhandel, Göteborg. 1982. pp. 207. £25.

VIOLET TENGBERG has a strange talent. Professor Teddy Brunius in his essay on her paintings speaks of mysteries on the internal plane and of eidetics, i.e., people with a secret knowledge (*mycin*), of images of the soul as being the true reality: he suggests also that the signs which the artist employs, the colour values and word phrases, 'float into her awareness as an eidetic'; he suspects a genuine ancestral origin to her vision and mentions that the deep reds and deep blues of her compositions are derived from the inside of her eyelids; furthermore that 'religion, poetry and myth are close to her kind of painting'. Professor Brunius quotes Baudelaire's experience of colour as a tone and Rimbaud's experience of a letter as having a particular colour, and reminds us of Odilon Redon's symmetrically arranged compositions, etc., and he says also that any idealism derived from Plato and Plotinus is based on the Romantic belief that the images of the soul are the true reality.

Dr Benkt-Erik Benktson in his essay 'Colour Events in Violet Tengberg's Paintings' struggles with concepts used by the German philosopher Max Scheler; with Professor Hans-Georg Gadamer's 'Erlebniskunst und condensed reality'; with Moritz Geiger's 'phenomenological coming down into the being of things' (*Zugänge zur Ästhetik*); with the ontology of the work of art; with the four elements of the Greek cosmology; with Franz Delitsch's Protestantische Realencyclopädie and tries to explain the polychrome character of the colour red: as red fire, blue fire, black and white fire. (Violet Tengberg: 'the red that was glowing in the most ardent flame of life which can unite or destroy'.) 'For me', the artist said, 'the pictures are like the stuff of life. The warp has been there a long time before the web was woven'.

Both Brunius, and Benktson quote my essay on Violet Tengberg's paintings published about ten years ago, in which I spoke of the effect of stained-glass windows in Gothic cathedrals, their essence being light penetrating the colour surfaces. I quoted Jaspers and Heidegger, analysed the pre-Christian symbol of the cross (The Tree

of Life, the Tree of Paradise), and when interpreting Violet Tengberg's visions as presented in her verses, I drew attention to Mechthild of Magdeburg (thirteenth century) and C. G. Jung's 'Seelenprobleme der Gegenwart'. It is obvious that when such heavy artillery is brought into action, there must be some 'mysterious quality' here which interpreters are eager to cope with. Well, in the present volume we have before us, the first major book on the artist which contains not only pictures—all reproduced in colour—but also many verses in Swedish and their French and English equivalents—quite a remarkable presentation. As I myself read Swedish, French and German, it was easy for me to detect certain incongruities here and there such as: 'Du Kvinna uppväck den dolde mannen i ditt huvud . . .' rendered into English as, 'Thou Lady rouse the Son of Man hidden in the cerebelum'. . . . The Swedish text, however, speaks only of 'you woman awake the hidden man in your head', no reference whatever to the Virgin Mary and Christ, etc.

The book is beautifully produced, printed on chalk paper with luminous whole-page colour illustrations. It presents the poems as an expression in their own right, not as interpretations or explanations of the accompanying pictures, and the pictures as original dynamic semi-abstract, sometimes also figurative, compositions, displaying a great variety of tonal values, the red-like lava pouring out of a volcano and the blue icy cold. When compared with the generally accepted contrast of warm and cold tonalities these express primary states of emotion. The constructive elements are few. It is as if the artist wanted to confront us with the elementary, primary images of the creation of the universe. When interpreting them I felt inclined to define them in Otto Weininger's notion as 'ideas' produced by a woman's brain—'the Henides'. Weininger speaks in his philosophy of the beginning of thought 'when all the elements appear as if on a blurred background', of the 'rudis indigestaque moles' and points out that their characterization can be recognized as Ge-

fühlsbetonung. He speaks of the primary stages of thought which emerge with every idea or mathematical concept, as of visionary phantasms, nebulous visions, wavering forms of varied images, 'schwankende Gestalten', mystical masks which resist a clarification, premonitions which precede the clarifying notions, etc. He also declares that the man lives consciously and the woman unconsciously, and the act of reasoning in women, according to himself may be somewhat distant from pure reasoning. (Otto Weininger, *Geschlecht und Charakter*, Wilhelm Braumüller, Wien und Leipzig, 1st edition 1903).

Let us now interrupt this reasoning and study the problem of the duality of vision. When Jacques-Henry Bornecque published his volume, *Peintres Écrivains*, (Metiers Graphiques, Paris 1947), he gave very illuminating examples of famous verses or prose passages as the themes or motives of similarly famous paintings or sculptures. (Proust—Van Dyck, Baudelaire—Delacroix, Goethe—Rubens, Maeterlinck—Bruegel the Elder, Goncourt—Botticelli, etc.) This is not the case with Violet Tengberg. The duality lies with her in the versatility in the arts, i.e. artists, musicians or poets being also painters or sculptors or musicians. (Walter Sorell, *Duality of Vision. Genius and Versatility in the Arts*, Thames and Hudson, London 1970). The musician Arnold Schoenberg was an outstanding expressionist painter, Richard Wagner wrote all his librettos, Michelangelo produced beautiful sonnets and highly literary letters, Leonardo da Vinci was at the same time a painter, sculptor, artist, technologist and philosopher, William Blake drew and painted and was the author of deep searching visionary texts, Goethe was in his youth such a fine draughtsman that for some time he could not decide what to pursue, the path of a painter or that of a poet. Victor Hugo produced excellent drawings and washes, Tagore was a poet, painter, composer and politician, the misogynist August Strindberg was a fine painter, as was the Spanish poet Garcia Lorca, etc. Leonardo da Vinci wrote that 'painting is a form of poetry made to be seen'. It is cer-

tainly true of Violet Tengberg. In her paintings, I note a strong eroticism. All Tengberg's work is conceived in a kind of spiritual (seelisch), geological disposition, it is elementary, timeless, using the two poles of opposites, the glowing heat of the Sahara and the freezing sphere of eternal ice, often only stammered not spoken, informal in the regions in which the soul is fertilized by a deeper knowledge. Stylistically it is connected with the work of the Swedish painter Kylberg, who for his part was indebted to Rouault in whose sphere religious and aesthetic experience meet. Both Tengberg's poetry and her painting have one common source—her spiritual make-up. Symbolism is wedded to mystical realism, making one think of the chemical marriage in alchemy. Strange happenings occur in her ethereal ecology. Primitivism and sophistication join forces as in Brancusi's sculpture in wood 'The Kiss', or in Victor Brauner's surrealist imagery, Christianity to biology and geology, and Blakean visionary states to monumental attitudes, to culminate finally in the conjunction of opposites, the wholeness of spiritual experience. There is beauty in her verses: 'Newly awakened rose,/ The truth—Sprout of Spring . . .' as there is beauty in her compositions and in her drawings. The titles (as for example 'Event 1-6', 'Event or Redemption', the 'Primary Energy', the 'Primary Melody of Creation', etc.) of her pictures are, alas, missing in this volume.

J. P. HODIN

Rosegarden and Labyrinth: A Study in Art Education. By SEONAI M. ROBERTSON. Gryphon Press, Lewes, Sussex. 1982. pp. 216. Paperbound, £4.00.

THERE ARE clearly many approaches to an understanding of human behaviour. On the one hand we have academic psychology which is analytical and empirical and on the other we have the great works of literature which could be said to be descriptive and interpretative. An understanding of human memory can be gained from the experimental literature on, say, Clustering Effects in Free Recall or from reading Proust's *À la*

Recherche du Temps Perdu. If there were a continuum between analytic and descriptive accounts of human behaviour Seonaid Robertson would not only be far to the descriptive end but, I suspect, she would be purposefully facing that way.

Seonaid Robertson's book is a classical personal account of the development of her own understanding of human creativity and her growing awareness of the crucial importance of emotional expression through the creative arts for the adult, the child and especially the adolescent. The author's serious intent and enthusiasm are undeniable and her ability to communicate these striking. She has the occasional 'purple passage' but she avoids the edge by her rigor and her sense of humour.

The book begins by describing a number of outstanding incidents in the author's early teaching career when the emotional response of the child to some particular theme in the art lesson was marked and memorable. The author was gradually made aware that certain themes or subjects frequently called forth a more intense response than others. She decided to undertake a study where she asked art teachers and students to select those products of their classes, where the children had been absorbed to an unusual intensity or where the works themselves were especially evocative. The author found certain recurring themes, such as waterfalls, caves, tunnels, horses, etc., and she concluded that such subjects could evoke a deeper response. So she was led to the idea that these themes represent symbols of particular power in our emotional lives.

The main flow of the book breaks off at two points to describe the author's own response through literature and the visual arts to certain symbols such as the walled interior rosegarden as an image of peace and replenishment and to the labyrinth which she sees as a symbol of initiation or conditional entry. She demonstrates how universal and deeply embedded are such symbols.

The author illustrates her thesis by a vivid description of a visit she made with a group of students to a coalmine. The experience

was traumatic and she conveys the overwhelming need to exorcize the experience in some cathartic expression. The springs of artistic creativity, she claims, rest in the need to express our deepest emotions and experiences and by transforming them in the individual's own terms, they become more manageable. Seonaid Robertson correctly and cleverly chooses to make this point by involving the reader directly in her own real-life experience.

In the final chapters the author makes use of the ethological studies of Tinbergen and Lorenz to suggest the unconscious and inherent nature of symbolism. She is searching for an understanding of the potency and universality of such symbols as the garden, the Madonna, the lion, the serpent, etc. The author is clearly tempted by biological explanations and also by the Jungian notion of the 'collective unconscious'. She does not fully consider what to me is a more palatable explanation in terms of simple learning and common experience. We may never have been in a literal maze or labyrinth, but the feeling of being lost, not knowing which way to turn, of losing our path is so common that we recognize the symbol instantly.

The book concludes with a plea to art teachers to recognize the vital need for children and adolescents to express their emotions and experiences through the arts and that ancient and universal symbols provide a particularly potent vehicle for such expression. Her views here are reminiscent of Viktor Lowenfeld and both he and Susanne Langer have influenced many of Seonaid Robertson's central ideas. But the form of the book, the direct and honest account of an intellectual quest for understanding and better practice, are entirely hers.

As was said at the outset, the author's account is both descriptive and based on her own subjective experience. Her conclusions could be objected to on the grounds that she offers rather little empirical support for her claims that artistic expression is cathartic, or that children respond more intensely to certain themes or that such themes may

have more symbolic potency than others.

Seonaid Robertson takes for granted the importance of the inner emotional motivation of the individual. Precisely those notions that the behaviourist psychologist like myself has been taught to be sceptical about. I found myself to be both envious and a tinge guilty to be wallowing in such waters. But Seonaid Robertson sweeps aside such scepticism by insisting that not only do we know what she means by emotional expression, but that any teacher or psychologist unaware or suspicious of such notions is likely to fail her charges badly. Moreover, to have qualms and doubts about the importance of this 'emotional life' is to deny what makes us most and uniquely human.

Can the analytical and interpretative accounts of human behaviour be reconciled? Some critics of academic psychology have said decidedly, 'No', since they claim that analytical and empirical approaches, by dissecting the distinct processes of human functioning, necessarily distort and diminish them. But without such a scientific approach to understanding man we could be limited to mere speculation and unsubstantiated opinion.

Seonaid Robertson's book is concerned with the intangible ineffable processes of the inner emotional life of individuals and yet she makes such concepts as undeniable and substantial as lumps of coal. But she too recognizes the need for establishing her claims through external and verifiable proof and demonstration as well as through appeals to our subjective awareness.

The answer must be that various approaches can coexist and ought to enrich one another and their proponents must have respect for any serious and thoroughgoing attempt to elucidate our understanding. Whatever one's training and perspective, Seonaid Robertson's book adds immeasurably to such an understanding.

LORNA SELFIE

THE EXPERIENCE of place in our lives and the emotions it engenders is being increasingly studied as a guide to planning. Such studies by sociologists, geographers and urban designers have led the way to the adoption of the official policy of public participation in planning and development. But as in all fields so often the initial studies have proved inadequate; it is felt that much more of human experience must be comprehended than was originally envisaged, and thus the studies have continued to take in an ever increasing range of human experience so that there is now a considerable literature on the subject. This book on valued environments is a notable recent contribution to the study.

It originated with a symposium on the subject held at the 1978 Annual Meeting of the Institute of British Geographers at Hull University. The conference papers have formed the basis of this collection of essays by eleven contributors, which are 'bound together by their focus upon the meaning of place and landscape in the lives of individuals and groups'.

In the introductory essay 'On the significance of valued environments' by the two editors, Jacquelin Burgess and John Gold, it is stated that the task is 'to find perspectives and approaches that allow us to identify the true nature and significance of places and landscapes that are valued, without losing sight of either the wider context of society as a whole or the pressing need to address our inquiries, . . . to practical as well as academic needs'. It is claimed that this spirit of investigation guides the essays in the book.

The editors speak of the two contrasting approaches to the study of value. One view sees value as an absolute quality, the other view sees it as a relative quality. The latter, it is contended, is closer to human experience and behaviour than the former, and this notion of relative value is the dominant view taken in these essays.

The first three essays are concerned with experiences of definite places. Brian Goodey writes of Bedford, Jacquelin Burgess of the Fens and Marion Shoard of the moors.

Valued Environments. Edited by JOHN R. GOLD and JACQUELIN BURGESS. Allen & Unwin. 1982. pp. 206. £15.00.

These are followed by three essays on various questions of values in landscape, with concluding essays on the appreciation of the value of locality in everyday urban life.

After giving his experiences in a visit to Bedford in staccato guide-book form, Brian Goodey makes some significant general comments. He emphasizes the importance of time in the experience of a place. He remarks that Bedford at mid-day Saturday and at mid-day Sunday are two different places. This can be extended to numerous places which are extremely busy at some times and ghost towns at other times, as of the contrast of the City of London on Monday and Sunday mornings. For me the latter ghost city has enchantment rather like standing in the Forum of Rome with a sense of the past pervading contemplation, an emotion which is largely the theme of David Lowenthal's essay on 'Revisiting valued landscapes'.

Brian Goodey remarks on the complexity of the experience of place. All the senses are involved, in addition to numerous emotional assessments, while in the interpretation of these there must be some relation of the experience to the personality of the recorder. He contends that the development of interpretation as an organized professional activity has until recently been largely American; but it is good to see in some of the very elaborate questionnaires that have been circulated in the preparation of structure plans that a considerable advance has been made in Britain, in spite of the cocksure, know-all attitude of some British planners. This is cited in the introductory essay when in reply to an assertion by a planner that 'We all know what people want' etc. the answer given is that we do *not* know what people want. We know to an extent, but only to a limited extent, and to know much more is one of the purposes of the investigations in this book.

The essay that will possibly appeal most to readers of this journal is that by John V. Punter on 'Landscape aesthetics: a synthesis and critique'. In his use of the term 'aesthetic' Punter returns to the earlier Greek meaning as used by Kant, that is, sense per-

ception as a source of knowledge, and not the subsequent widely adopted definition of Baumgarten as the appreciation or science of the beautiful. Punter's purpose in so doing is 'to integrate aesthetic with socio-cultural interpretations'.

Punter proposes three paradigms in considering landscape aesthetics, perception, interpretation and landscape quality. The first embraces the mechanics of how we perceive landscape and the links between vision, perception, comprehension, preference and action; the second is concerned with the meanings imputed to landscape, particularly its social and cultural content; and the third focuses on formal qualities.

Subjective assessment of landscape values is prominent in all of these. For example in interpretation architects tend to emphasize formal qualities; anthropologists and geographers think of the landscape as an expression of social, economic and cultural life; while the social historian thinks of the landscape as a composite expression of past social values and sentiments. All are a reflection of different human values.

In Stephen Daniels's essay on 'Humphry Repton and the morality of landscape' the accent is, as the title implies, on the relation of aesthetic and ethical values. The landscape architecture of Humphry Repton and his attitude to his creations illustrates this. There is the suggestion that the exclusively aesthetic valuation is self-indulgent and amoral, and that the validity of such valuation needs the justification of use and goodness. Thus a landscape must benefit people and Repton introduces a cornfield into his landscape. Yet Daniels is sceptical of Repton's genuineness in this, and considers that he is concerned mainly with appearances for his own satisfaction. Speaking of the prospect of a village in the landscape Daniel remarks 'that what really matters is not that the village *is* cheerful but that it *looks* cheerful: in other words, what is at issue is not so much the cheerfulness of the villagers as the cheerfulness of Repton, the observer'. This is an interesting example of subjective visual valuation.

Inevitably, perhaps, in this book refer-

ences are occasionally made to criticisms of the destruction of valued human environments. The editors state that 'Large-scale environmental change, not instigated by the inhabitants themselves and outside their control, often seems disturbing, disruptive and divisive'. For the practical purposes of development the difficulty is to translate the several subjective valuations into an acceptable objective policy. The book gives so much useful diagnosis on the subject from so many points of view as to indicate the need for a general philosophy in this context of relative values and the decisive factors in what to hold and what to change. 'Preservation and planned change' was a good slogan, but the task is to determine what values spell preservation and what change. In much change there is some sacrifice of values. One contention of this timely book is that there is too much sacrifice.

ARNOLD WHITTICK

The Human Home: The myth of the sacred environment. By J. A. WALTER. Lion Publishing, Tring. 1982. pp. 224. Paper-bound, £1.95.

THE AUTHOR belongs to the Ilkley Group, which explores Christian views of sociology. In this book he considers the environment from the point of view of a sociologist of religion. The result is an unusual, lively and provocative book that deserves to be widely read. It is a stimulating contribution, and in some measure a guide, to the growing literature on the environment.

Although Judaism and Christianity have disenchanted the world, our attitudes to the environment—the towns we live in, the countryside we visit—are nevertheless, so Dr Walter maintains, religious in character. This, so the main message of the book runs, is unfortunate for it means that we misperceive the world. A primitive tribe lives in a world of myth; so do we.

Evangelists, revivalists and missionaries have not disappeared from our society but have reappeared as ecologists, complete with the language of salvation and damnation. Walter has a point; I have just heard an

ecology party demanding changes in our life styles far beyond anything the conventional political parties can envisage, the sort of thing, as Walter says, that the preacher might demand and which, if he got, would amount to a religious conversion.

Most societies have held dear their home places and feared the foreign but our assessment of what is sacred and what profane is reversed. Witness our mass tourism and veneration of the wilderness. In Britain we are particularly afflicted by the belief that God made the countryside and man the town, or in Walter's terms, that the countryside is beautiful *and* natural (a product of nature). The countryside is sacred, then, thereby rendering the places where most of us live, the towns and cities, profane. So the strictest aesthetic control is exercised over national parks, conservation areas, etc., while the myth grows that beauty cannot be found in the mundane places where most people live. But these places are often situated in view of striking natural features, the sea, rivers bringing veins of countryside into the city centre, surrounding hills. London is a particularly unfortunate exception, unfortunate because it is in this atypical city 'where one is cut off from nature' that most of the planners and policy makers live. New York and Los Angeles are said to be other such examples.

Calendars, picture books and postcards of our countryside and heritage reinforce the myth of the countryside as sacred and beautiful. Walter is hostile to the sacralization of landscape for two reasons. First in privileging some parts of our environment it downgrades the remainder. Secondly, no aspect of the material world can carry religious meaning. God, not nature, is our salvation. We should enjoy and use the natural environment (as say hang-gliders and rock-climbers do) and not adopt a falsely religious attitude towards it. After rejecting God humanity has turned to the world to meet its spiritual needs but the search is a vain one for, as Christianity and Judaism teach, there is nothing sacred in the material environment and no salvation in it.

Since there is no ultimate meaning in the

tangible world, we are free, in the author's unfortunate word, to 'inject our meanings into it and to enjoy it in the light of those meanings, without ever taking them too seriously. . . . Only when our search for the sacred is directed away from the world are we freed to enjoy the world'.

I welcome this book for its reminder that religious elements are more often found mingled with aesthetic ones than our post-Enlightenment atheism allows us to credit: consider the case of the sublime. Nevertheless the form this takes in Walter's argument should wake from their dogmatic slumbers any philosophers who have fallen into supposing that aesthetics is the interest of fellow professionals only. For this book shows in an unusually clear manner what has often been noted of the history of philosophy, namely what unexpected disturbances ideas can cause when they escape from their native domain. It is salutary to see what havoc is wreaked (the myth of Walter's subtitle) when statements about aesthetic perception as disinterested contemplation and the work of art as the object of aesthetic perception, statements commonplace in aesthetics, are taken out of their original context and inimically seen as characterizing our modern, public (and irrational) attitude to the countryside.

In wanting to make use of the discoveries of aesthetics Walter has commendably turned to work by Harold Osborne but extrapolates from his reading to the conclusion that to regard the countryside aesthetically is to treat it in a diminished way as privileged visual spectacle only; we especially fail to see it as the product of human labour. Such aesthetic regard is taken to be equivalent to at least the following beliefs (or attitudes): that we treat the countryside as if it were a work of art and as an object of sacred regard, since in our culture, works of art, possessed of no use value, function as sacred objects.

A village becomes an object purely to be looked at, not lived in. Its place as home is subordinated to its role as picturesque spectacle to be depicted in postcards that foster the deception that the place (Corfe Castle or

Castle Coombe say) did not come into existence to satisfy human needs but to function purely as spectacle. To value a place or landscape aesthetically is to assume that ordinary economic laws do not operate there but are somehow magically suspended. The countryside 'has become an anomalous and curious art object to be visited and enjoyed during those anomalous periods of time called leisure'.

It scarcely needs saying in this journal that the leading writers in aesthetics, such as our President, do not themselves operate with these diminished concepts of the work of art and the aesthetic attitude. For one thing, Osborne's insistence on the perception of a work of art as a matter of skilled achievement and training is given no weight in Walter's characterization of the aesthetic. Perhaps, however, it is worth saying here that Walter's account is an example of how somebody working outside the field understands, or applies, its leading ideas when he has need to have recourse to it.

One cannot say simply that Walter has misunderstood and got things wrong, for whether or not we do take towards the countryside the attitude that he characterizes, it does more or less correspond to what one might call the thin version of aesthetic perception. This version turns up not only in Walter's argument but within the literature of aesthetics. His book therefore gives point to recent warnings by David Best and others that we need to be clear about how to distinguish (and relate) art and the aesthetic. I would add that the question of how 'thick' a concept of the aesthetic we should be prepared to operate with is now shown by Walter's book to be a matter of some practical urgency and not of academic interest merely to philosophers. These domestic lessons are not of course the ones that Dr Walter intended to teach but then what he has unintentionally shown is that the question of what the aesthetic attitude is (Dickie's article on its mythical nature is not in the bibliography) is not, or is not merely, a domestic question for philosophers.

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English Within the Arts: a Radical Alternative for English and the Arts in the Curriculum.

By PETER ABBS. Hodder & Stoughton. 1982. pp. 148. Paperbound, £4.50.

FORWARD-LOOKING theorists of education should always embrace (as a focus for controversy) any new text, especially since, as the author of this one recognizes: 'Economic recession tends to spell educational regression' (p. 1). The principle concerns of this text are the pedagogic consequences of the 'realization' that 'the intrinsic concerns of English as a discipline are literary, expressive, and aesthetic' (p. 1). These consequences for educational theory and practice are drawn out through the development of models of specific classes constructed around this assumption and outlines of Abbs's own courses for prospective teachers of English: a powerful and attractive argument both for the *possibility* and the *desirability* of teaching English in this way. Moreover, it includes, as an appendix, key excerpts from the Associated Examining Board's 1979 document under the revealing heading: *Towards a More Sensitive 'A' Level Literature Examination*. In total, this amounts to a view of English much closer to the view generally taken (by educational theorists, at least) of the visual arts; that is to say, as an expressive discipline involved with 'the embodiment, through a specific medium (in this case, language) of individual experience' (p. 119).

Such conclusions are very appealing; and one might think that Abbs's powerful and evocative examples succeed in establishing his case, at least in its weakest form: English *could* be taught in this way and there are possible gains in doing so. But Abbs claims to show how a consideration of what he takes to be the valuable points in the enduring but misconceived views of English can and perhaps must lead one to his conclusion. And this is the topic of most direct relevance to readers of this journal.

Abbs's argument here seems to go like this: we will not understand the educational relevance of our subjects unless we see them connectedly. That is to say, if we are going to use the kind of picture of understanding

and assessment appropriate to what Abbs throughout calls 'the epistemic community of expressive disciplines' we must, first, locate that epistemic community and, second, locate examples from it in the appropriate *genre*. Thus if such 'criteria' are to be applied to the evaluation and assessment of English, it must first be seen as an art; and doing so allows us to recognize the forms of understanding it fosters and the benefits which can be derived from it. And this means we must see English 'as a discipline in its own right, as a distinct symbolic form' (p. 9). Now one can quibble with the dualistic overtones implicit in seeing English as symbolic: most of those with an interest in the philosophy of language would agree that it is highly uninformative to treat meaning in the arts as symbolic. But putting aside such quibbles, one understands what this should mean. Yet is it right to focus on English as directly meaning-bearing rather than as simply the '... medium of nearly all teaching and learning' (p. 9) about which we do not *need* to know for its own sake, but simply in so far as it helps us elsewhere? Abbs urges that it *is* right and necessary; and that this can be seen by an appraisal of the principles and critical tools of three major traditions of English teaching. These are: *The Progressives*—'the emphasis on impulse and innate tendency towards individuation'; *The Cambridge School*—'the emphasis on tradition, discrimination, and critical audience'; *The Sociolinguists*—'the emphasis on process and the clarifying principle of "Language across the Curriculum"' (p. 30). Integrating these elements can offer us English as individual, focused on process and alive to the forces of audience: in short as an expressive form. And much as one might *hope* that English is presently integrated into the arts where 'The arts form one indispensable symbolic form for the integration of experience' (p. 31) one recognizes that this is not often the case in schools and universities.

Yet if Abbs's conclusions seem compelling, his arguments by contrast do not. I first encountered his ideas in his essay 'The Reconstitution of English as Art' in a col-

lection edited by Malcolm Ross. The transition from essay to book has not been a particularly happy one. For what were understandable brevities and omissions in a paper represent substantial lacunae in the book. None of the three traditions is discussed in sufficient detail; the desired conclusions are asserted rather than argued for. Moreover, there is a tendency throughout the book to use evocative and figurative language. The term 'psyche', for example, is explicitly used because of a 'resonance' (p. 4), and though remarks towards its explication are offered, a more developed and less metaphorical account is required. Similarly, the key term 'epistemic community' is given the briefest description (p. 5), and there it is asserted that 'the arts form an epistemic community'. If they do not, Abbs's modelling of the study of English on, say, visual art will be beside the point. Yet it is by no means *obvious* that any sense can be given to the expression 'epistemic community' in this context. Many writers have urged the anomalous nature of literature within the arts. What would the consequences of such a view be? Some have even argued that literature is not an art-form (and hence that English is not an art-making discipline). Such arguments are not seriously confronted here.

Abbs's response might be found in Chapter 2, 'The Pattern of Art-Making', in which he seeks 'to delineate the common ground between the expressive disciplines' (p. 56). This is the least satisfactory chapter in the book. Its argumentative strategy is obscure. Readers of this journal will be justly impatient with, for example, the description of the art-maker as one who 'gives subjectivity an objective representation so that he can come to *know* his own experience' (p. 35). In so far as I understand this, I agree—but one is not *learning* about the commonalities within the arts unless the terms 'subjectivity', 'objective', and 'representation' are made a lot clearer than they are here. Whatever commonalities do exist require a less rhetorical presentation. Abbs has accepted D. H. Lawrence's view that logic is too coarse to catch life, but then

comments, 'yet in an area as contentious and problematic as English teaching, a few opening definitions are called for' (p. 9). I conclude that *more* clarity than merely these 'few opening definitions' is required.

The usefulness of this book is not as badly impaired by these few flaws I have noted here as one might think. Indeed the attractiveness of the conclusions and their derivation from Abbs's examples, and from his demonstration of the concrete possibilities of acting in ways which many must find appealing, makes those conclusions far stronger than any arguments which might be urged against them—or indeed, for them. And it is on account of the *practical* help it can offer that Abbs's book deserves to be widely read.

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Re-Reading English. Edited by PETER WIDDOWSON. Methuen. 1982. pp. 246. £3.95; clothbound, £7.95.

THIS BOOK consists of a collection of essays on English as an academic discipline by British critics who are mainly Marxist in approach. As anyone who has attended recent conferences will know, Marxism has become a significant presence in English studies. It is, however, a form of Marxism which claims to have transcended more traditional or 'vulgar' Marxism, being greatly influenced by Althusser and Lacanian psychoanalysis. One of the main interests of this book is that it allows one to assess whether or not more recent Marxist criticism can overcome the difficulties encountered by more traditional Marxist approaches.

The book opens with a combative essay by Peter Widdowson which claims that there is a crisis in English studies. Marxists, of course, continually use a discourse of crisis in their analysis of bourgeois society and its institutions. Indeed, a general problem about Marxism's claim to be a scientific analysis of society is that it is initially committed to the view that bourgeois society is riddled with irresolvable contradictions. This makes the disinterestedness of

any Marxist analysis suspect since it will almost inevitably conclude that bourgeois institutions are in a state of crisis. One should therefore look carefully and with some scepticism at Widdowson's claim.

He provides little hard evidence that there is a crisis in English studies. Difficulties in the English Faculty at Cambridge, not a rare occurrence, are hardly sufficient. Of course, many English departments incorporate different and sometimes irreconcilable approaches, but Widdowson provides no evidence that many departments are unable to function because of this or that the number of students reading English has fallen seriously as a result. It is also significant that Widdowson sees the presence of opposed and conflicting critical positions in terms of crisis since this implies that there should be one dominant critical position. It could be argued that the existence of opposed approaches is not only inevitable in literary studies but healthy, and that it is his implicit belief in and desire for one single and coherent position that needs to be questioned.

In fact one might be forgiven for believing, after having read this volume, that if there is any crisis it is within Marxist criticism itself since it aspires towards a high degree of unity and coherence. In the mainly theoretical first section of this book, the dominant concern is with the problem of reconciling Marxism with structuralist and post-structuralist criticism. The belief that such a reconciliation is possible has been an important factor in the revival of Marxist criticism in this country. This book suggests, however, that many Marxist critics distrust structuralist thinking and believe it should be accommodated only on the most selective basis. Traditional Marxist aims must be given priority. As Peter Brooker writes: 'the more pressing, practical and political need is to develop a materialist criticism and socialist pedagogy, and . . . it is in terms of this priority that the post-structuralist contribution ought to be judged' (p. 63). But it is doubtful if such a procrustean attitude to post-structuralist theory is possible and at the end of this

book one is left with the strong impression that there is an unresolved tension between Marxist and structuralist thinking.

The second section of 'Case Studies' suggests that this newer form of Marxist criticism raises as many problems as 'vulgar' Marxist criticism. One recurrent theme of this volume is that the validity of the category 'literature' is questionable. For Carole Snee "The text", of course, does not have to be a book, it can be a newspaper report, a song, a mass demonstration, a campaign, etc., etc., . . . This approach thus tends to dissolve the sharp distinction between the "literary" and "non-literary" text, and to look at the production of meanings and their consumption' (pp. 166-7). Other critics, such as Catherine Belsey and Antony Easthope, rather grudgingly devote their time to analysing works such as *Daniel Deronda* and Sidney's sonnets when they believe there is no justification for elevating such works as 'literature'.

This raises several problems. For example, it fails to deal with the relation between craft and value. Although a note left for the milkman and *Paradise Lost* may both be 'texts' the difference at the level of craft surely constitutes a difference in kind. Because most of the critics in this volume wish to dispense with the concept of value which is constitutive of the category 'literature', it is difficult for them to come to terms with this difference. Of course, in this century the elevation of art as a unique kind of activity has led to craft being rejected as intrinsic to art, with the result that piles of bricks and other such objects are considered as works of art merely because they are placed in art galleries. It is ironic that one can thus see a connection between recent Marxist criticism and this view of art since traditionally, and rightly I believe, Marxism has attacked the division that has developed since the Romantics between the artist and other types of craftsman.

It is easy to see why many of the critics in this volume wish to undermine the concept of literature. They believe that the application of literary critical techniques to the analysis of non-literary texts is of great

ideological value. But this approach also leads to difficulties. For example, Carole Snee, in an analysis of a report by a government committee shows that this report is based on certain unstated and thus unargued assumptions which are nevertheless strongly reinforced by rhetorical devices. Though this analysis might be instructive to naive readers who believe that language simply reflects reality, more sophisticated readers may wonder how it could be otherwise. Carole Snee also ignores the difficulty this raises with regard to the critic's own discourse, since her own criticism is similarly based on unstated assumptions rhetorically reinforced. If there is no hierarchy of discourses, as many of the critics in this volume argue, critical discourse becomes infinitely regressive. This problem scarcely arises in strictly literary criticism, since criticism is seen as only a means of increasing one's appreciation or understanding of a literary text and thus secondary to it.

Related difficulties are presented by the literary criticism in this volume. Catherine Belsey attacks Leavis's reading of *Daniel Deronda* as exemplifying a banal morality and offers in its place a reading that is 'explicitly produced' rather than merely 'recognised' (p. 134). This involves, somewhat predictably, interpreting the novel in the light of contemporary feminism. She brushes aside intentional considerations as irrelevant and interprets the novel as a critique of patriarchy, citing Deronda's mother's revolt against her father and her upbringing as a parallel instance to that of Gwendolen Harleth. The problem here is that George Eliot clearly regards Deronda's mother's rebellion as misguided and mistaken (though understandable) and this condemnation is embodied in the language and structure of the novel. All of this narrative organization is swept aside by Catherine Belsey in order to interpret the work as an attack on patriarchy. What then is the difference between an 'explicitly produced' reading and subjectively projecting whatever meaning one wants onto a literary work?

It is clear that many of the writers in this

volume believe that Marxist criticism should resist being accommodated by the literary institution as just one more approach and aspire to being the dominant critical mode. However, this volume suggests that this is unlikely to happen soon and that other critics will continue to be selective in the use they make of Marxist approaches.

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Deconstruction: Theory and Practice. By CHRISTOPHER NORRIS. Methuen. 1982. pp. 157. £2.95; clothbound, £6.50.

AS AN introduction to deconstruction, this concise and unpretentious book valuably augments the extant work on Derrida by writers such as Culler, Spivak, Descombes and the Yale deconstructionists. Norris's central achievement is both to have focused clearly on deconstruction itself and to have established this focus via reference to a comprehensive range of contexts: literary-critical, linguistic, philosophical and political. He rightly presents deconstructive 'theory' through accounts of its practice.

To bring out the value of Norris's approach, I will sketch from one standpoint the problematic, most systematically conceived and 'resolved' by Hegel, within which Derrida works: the world's irreducibility, its otherness, to thought. For Derrida, Western philosophy in confronting this has conceived language as separable from thought, as a static parallel chain of signifiers and signifieds which stand in a distinct mutual relation. What has closed this chain, preventing it from going on *ad infinitum*, i.e., from each signified itself being a signifier of something else, is the invocation of the Logos, as a 'transcendental signified', which acts as the privileged ground for the semantic stability and literality of all other signifieds, notably of subject and object. As an uttered word, a signifier, the Divine Logos is indissociable from its meaning whose content has a substantive existence as the rational order of Creation itself. The revelation of this reality as spoken and heard implies an immediate self-presence and self-

identity of meaning. By thus constraining otherness, partly through the phonocentric privileging of speech over writing, this logocentrism has repressed all that might re-open this closure and redeem otherness from its adjectival status by reducing the 'literal' relation between signifier and signified to metaphoricity. Derrida's project attempts to articulate the various forms of this closure in Western thought and to effect a re-opening: deconstruction is this dual gesture.

The very form of Norris's book conveys the methodological negativity of deconstruction, its reduction of the traditionally substantival to the adjectival, in which respect it falls prey to itself: deconstruction is not 'a method, a system or a settled body of ideas'. Norris situates its absence of definition within the contexts listed above. We are shown its literary-critical emergence: through dissatisfied critics like Hartman, de Man and Hillis Miller, it re-opened the New Critical frontier separating literature, as figurative, from criticism which was viewed as literal and rational. This had presupposed a stability of textual meaning, sanctioned ultimately by metaphysical and religious claims to truth. Norris shows how deconstruction reacts against the tendency of Anglo-American criticism to 'domesticate' structuralism. The historical ambivalence of structuralism's own relation to deconstruction is aptly brought out by contrasting the earlier and later Barthes. A later chapter analyses in some detail the diverse deconstructive approaches of the Yale critics towards literary tradition, rhetoric and the connection between criticism and philosophy. Norris highlights both the self-indulgent dangers of deconstructive criticism, and its scope: it is impelling 'a total revaluation of interpretative theory and practice'. De Man justly emerges as its most rigorous exponent and Bloom as its most balanced critic. Both sections are argued with insight, though a more detailed account of the 'menace' of structuralism might have been instructive. Also, I prefer Hartman's view of deconstructive criticism as being less of a 'novel enterprise' and

'more of a relentless focus' on questions concerning the depth of logocentrism's influence on our views about art.

The next context, philosophical and linguistic, shows the relative constancy of deconstruction's relation both to logocentrism and to key Derridean notions such as 'writing', 'presence' and 'différance'. It does this by describing Derrida's own 'rigorous' deconstructions of Saussure, Rousseau, Levi-Strauss and Husserl. In each case deconstruction is the 'active accomplice of a repressed but already articulate writing': it shows how this repressed theme subverts the very conceptual order of repression. The contradictions and *aporai* thus evinced reveal the movement of 'différance', which Derrida designates as 'the production of differing/deferring' which disrupts the self-identity of presence presupposed by the 'metaphysical' repression of 'writing' in its various forms. My only reservation concerning these otherwise excellent expositions is that Norris doesn't explain the connection between 'writing' understood as inscription and its Derridean sense as a representation of the trace. Indeed, 'trace' itself is left unexamined. Norris shrewdly emphasizes the importance for Derrida of viewing phenomenology as a 'running critique' of structuralism, whereas 'conventional' accounts have reduced their relation to successive 'schools'. A chapter on Nietzsche and Heidegger shows how they anticipate Derrida's deconstructive 'style and strategy', via the former's view of truth as metaphor and the latter's problematization of 'being'. The discussion here is accurate but it might have profited from examining the validity of Derrida's notions of 'metaphor' and 'presence'. Despite the alleged dynamism of Derrida's vocabulary, I'm not wholly convinced that many of his 'definitions' are not so mutually circular as to disable any excursus from the metaphysical enclosure.

To my mind, there are problems with the next chapter, which argues that, between them, 'Marx and Nietzsche stake out the . . . rival claims of post-structuralist criticism'. The mere three pages on Hegel

inadequately reflect Derrida's avowed position with respect to Hegel as one of 'infinite and radical displacement'. He views any possibility of defining 'writing', 'difference' and 'trace' as articulable primarily against the Hegelian notions of Contradiction and *Aufhebung* (sublation). For Derrida, Hegel 'summed up the entire philosophy of the logos'. A wider treatment might have comprehended, for example, the fact that both Marx (in his 1844 manuscripts) and Derrida attack the Hegelian Dialectic at its third phase, where Spirit inwardizes externality as Self-Consciousness. Marx views this as 'a confirmation of . . . alienation' and Derrida, as 'the reappropriation of difference'. Derrida acknowledges this initial complicity: the primary exigency here is the re-reading of Marx's relation to Hegel. As it is, Norris circumvents the Frankfurt School and attacks 'structuralist' Marxists such as Eagleton and Jameson from a professed Nietzschean-Derridean basis: deconstruction sees no possible divorce between criticism and ideology, and this view, Norris argues, is validated by Eagleton's use of metaphorical language in his advocacy of that possibility. But a deconstructionist's concept of 'ideology' is obviously not coterminous with a Marxist's, and Norris doesn't locate the arena of possible conflict over this notion (Derrida himself is well aware of the problems involved here). Also, if all language, including that of science, is metaphorical, merely to say that Eagleton's language, or 'the' Marxist model of representation (as if there were but one) is metaphorical, fails to carry any specific force of impugnment.

Norris's final chapter very impartially expounds the variety of objections to deconstruction: in particular, the argument from common sense, the charge that scepticism is self-refuting, and the Wittgensteinian criticisms of sceptical philosophies of language. There is much truth in Norris's reply that these fail to think through the issues raised by deconstruction, though he could have fittingly argued this by analysing at least one of Derrida's essays in detail.

Norris perhaps overstresses Derrida's

originality. Many of the *aporiai* 'revealed' by Derrida were long ago encountered as such by the neo-Hegelian philosophers in connecting phenomena to their various absolutes. It may be that Derrida has transferred the appurtenance of those *aporiai* from the relation between thought and the world to the institution of language within that relation. Also, Derrida's notion of 'logocentrism' may be too comprehensive, perhaps coercing towards a uniform assailability the enormous range of determinations that 'logos' has evidently undergone from Heraclitus through Hegel to Husserl. Finally, whether he has added anything to the understanding of time or of logic—both important in his thought—is uncertain. Despite these immense difficulties, the value of Norris's book remains unquestionable. It is bound to inspire much-needed discussion of Derrida. It raises exactly the right issues, confronts each one seriously and is dignified by a clarity of style which makes it a pleasure to read.

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Images of Crisis: Literary Iconology, 1750 to the Present. By GEORGE P. LANDOW. Routledge. 1982. pp. 234. £17.50.

'ICONOLOGY' is defined by Landow as 'the study of situations, paradigms, and figurations in the arts'. As his title suggests, he is primarily interested in the organizing images or paradigms of crisis which have haunted western imaginations since the mid eighteenth century. Such images can be at once literary and visual: to take his prime example, that of 'shipwreck', we can set against Gerard Manley Hopkins's poem, *The Wreck of the Deutschland*, Gericault's painting, *The Raft of the 'Medusa'*. Both, Landow claims, represent a crisis in the traditional Augustinian paradigm of life as a journey. By the middle of the eighteenth century, even for devout Christians, the focus was less on the successful pilgrimage of the individual soul than on the catastrophes that might prevent its completion. As the commonest and most spectacular form of travel-disaster, the image of ship-

wreck took on a new and prophetic significance. Though *Robinson Crusoe*, the original paradigm, is charged with a sense of divine providence, for its nineteenth-century readers it came to stand as an image of man's isolation and lonely self-sufficiency. Mrs. Gaskell, a devout Unitarian, is following a tradition as old as Rousseau when she makes Thornton, in *North and South*, invoke Defoe's novel as a model of the human situation, and therefore a defence of capitalism. For the more religious fainthearted (such as Froude in *The Nemesis of Faith*) the paradigm took on a new and sinister significance, while for the twentieth-century non-believer it could, by a final ironic turn of the wheel, become a symbol of welcome liberation from the bondage of religion and tradition. Landow traces his great exemplum through a vast panorama of instances and variations in both literature and art. Thus the wreck can be taken as a psychological, a spiritual, or even a political icon; the survivor may be a drifter, a swimmer, or a castaway—each with attendant mutations.

But, as the subtitle implies, this near-exhaustive concentration on a single theme is intended as more than a catalogue of a genre—though it is valuable merely as such. According to its dust-jacket, it is intended as a companion volume to Landow's previous book, *Victorian Types, Victorian Shadows* (1980), which dealt with what it describes as 'the almost completely unexpected' importance of biblical typology in Victorian art and literature. Where that work dealt with varieties of belief (not all totally 'unexpected'), this treats of varieties of doubt. In fact, however, this implied parallelism is not quite accurate. *Images of Crisis* also makes, in a way the previous book does not, substantial theoretical claims of an apparently structuralist kind.

The real objective, as Landow soon makes clear, is the nature of cultural paradigms themselves. Though there are quotations from Foucault, Lévi-Strauss, Derrida, and Barthes as chapter-headings, his most seminal idea is taken from Kuhn's *Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. This is the notion of

the 'paradigm' itself. Just as a scientific paradigm, in Kuhn's sense, has 'the function of sealing off certain areas of dispute and thus allowing scientists to go about their main endeavour', so cultural paradigms such as the shipwreck, argues Landow, 'impose a sense of order upon the formlessness and sheer multiplicity of existence in this world.' The crises of a culture in transition express themselves through the transformations of previously dominant cultural paradigms.

Yet, as that last quotation's generality implies, the analogy remains oddly incomplete and undeveloped. Though he illustrates his thesis with a superfluity of parallel detail from both visual and verbal sources, Landow never explains what precisely are 'the areas of dispute' that are sealed off from discussion by the paradigm of the shipwreck. If there are no such areas identifiable, then these cultural paradigms, interesting though they are, cannot be seen as Kuhnian in function: they are simply focal, or (in Coleridge's phrase) 'organizing images'. Our suspicions that this may be so are strengthened by a curious anti-climactic banality of conclusion that tends to round off the more theoretical sections (easily separable from the more interesting illustrative material). On p. 15, for instance, we are told that 'transformations of a literal thing (or event) . . . permitted the situations of avalanche, shipwreck, or Pompeii to serve as cultural codes. They permitted, in other words, members of a particular society to communicate something of interest to one another.' The cause of this stylistic let-down seems to lie in the very desire to generalize and to discover a single common structure linking all the uses of an image in a given period. Thus a potentially illuminating comparison between Thoreau and Hopkins is marred by the constant straining to find the common cultural paradigm when the two authors are manifestly displaying utterly different kinds of sensibility and travelling in very different directions. What they have in common is the verbal image itself, not an underlying common cultural assumption, still less a potential area of

dispute that is suppressed.

Similarly, Landow's critical stance means that he must resolutely refuse to distinguish between paradigms in imagery and plot. The ship of state metaphor (which, as he admits, goes back to Plato) that pervades Carlyle's *French Revolution* is treated as if it is of the same kind as the action of Coleridge's *Ancient Mariner*. There may well be a case for claiming just that: but I contend that it needs to be argued rather than assumed. The structuralist decorations (they are no more than that) are not a cultural code absolving him from academic rigour. Nor should a cultural historian refer to the Union Jack as 'England's flag'.

As Landow has shown in his other books, he is capable of much finer critical discriminations than his self-imposed straightjacket here permits. At his best he is still capable of the most acute insights, as when he comments on the oblivion of Falconer's once-popular poem, *The Shipwreck*, that an epic subject alone is insufficient, it demands that the poet uses it 'as part of something very like a theogony . . .'. Here, at last, is a distinction between things that look similar, rather than a generalization about things that differ.

STEPHEN PRICKETT

University of Sussex

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CONFERENCE NEWS

THE SEVENTEENTH Annual Conference of the British Society of Aesthetics will be held in London from 16 to 18 September 1983. All inquiries, including offers to read papers, should be sent to Mr Richard Woodfield, the Honorary Secretary of the Society. His address will be found inside the front cover of this number.

The X International Congress in Aesthetics will be held in Montreal, Canada from 15 to 19 August 1984, on the theme 'Artworks and the Transformations of Philosophy'. The Congress will concentrate on the general problem of how appreciating and interpreting artworks can raise critical questions about basic assumptions in philosophical reflection. Do some accepted artworks force revisions in our various understandings of what counts as doing philosophy?

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All correspondence should be addressed to Professor Peter McCormick, X International Congress in Aesthetics Secretariat, Dept of Philosophy, University of Ottawa, Ottawa, Ontario, K1N 6N5, Canada.

The Austrian Ludwig Wittgenstein Society is pleased to announce the Eighth International Wittgenstein Symposium from 15 to 21 August 1983 in Kirchberg/Wechsel, lower Austria. The topic of this year's symposium will be Aesthetics-Philosophy of Religion. All correspondence should be addressed to Professor Werner Leinfellner, Dept of Philosophy, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Lincoln, Nebraska 68588, U.S.A. (Telephone (402) 472-3061 (office), (402) 477-2960 (home).)

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